SHOOTOUT II

TONY LESCE

MORE TECHNIQUES OF MODERN GUNFIGHTING

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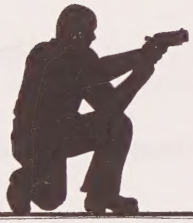

TONY LESCE

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SHOOTOUT II
More Techniques of Modern Gunfighting
By Tony Lesce

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Dedicated to the gallant men of the Tempe, Arizona, Police Department and to the many friends who gave me useful advice for this book.

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Introduction

My first book, *Shootout*, was not intended as the final word on the subject of gunfighting and it did not turn out to be so. A lot has happened since it was published and the technique of gunfighting has progressed so much that it has expanded to require a whole new book, not merely a revised edition of the old one.

This is an advanced text for those who are seeking a guide to both the theory and the nuts and bolts of gunfighting. It is for those who have to put words into practice.

There are several possible approaches to the subject. The most common one is what I call the "catalog", which lists all of the currently available hardware in great detail and has photographs of every gun and holster on the market. That is not the approach taken here: you can find that sort of information in *Gun Digest* or *The Shooter's Bible*.

Another approach is also hardware oriented; a long and tedious discussion of the stopping power of the magnum calibers and a dissertation on why all of the smaller calibers are useless or worse than uselsss. Some will even advise you not to shoot anyone with a small caliber weapon because it will only make him angry and then he may hurt you. Enough people have been killed with small caliber weapons to make this approach questionable.

Yet another approach is the "I was a killer for the Mafia" book, in which the author tells you how he assassinated dozens of underworld figures by coming up close to them in a restaurant or a parking lot and blowing their brains out with a short-barrelled pistol. This is assassination, pure and simple, and has little to do with shooting it out with an armed and determined opponent.

My approach is to set out a basic theory of gunfighting centered on what actually works and what doesn't work. I will concentrate on the nitty-gritty of shooting for real, not "combat" match shooting. I will ignore the PPC, the police type match shot with heavily customized guns and holsters that would not be practical on the street. You will find in these pages information on how to learn about gunfighting, how to teach yourself and how to become proficient at it. You will also find discussions of tactics that apply to various situations that you may encounter.

Your primary objective in a shootout will be SURVIVAL. If you come out second best in a gunfight you obviously won't be able to enjoy your victory or even to stand trial if the legal end of it is not quite in your favor. Therefore, an aggressive attitude is important. You must go into it with the determination to win and dominating the situation from the start is the best way to keep it from deteriorating in a way that is harmful to you. It is essential to have a simple and coherent plan, to think fast, and to use good judgment. The worst thing that you can do is to stand there trying to decide on your next move while your opponent shoots at you.

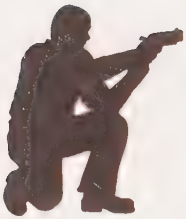
Most of the situations dealt with here are defensive and the most likely defensive weapon is the pistol. Some situations are blatantly offensive in nature, which implies the time and opportunity to choose a more powerful weapon. Your own good judgement will be the best guide.

This book is not to teach you how to perform well in a match or formal contest in which you play by the rules. It is not to teach you how to outshoot someone in an equal contest. When you are fighting for your life and shooting for keeps you want to deal from a stacked deck and any attempt at fair play is a foolish and perhaps very dangerous mistake. If you confront your opponent face to face and say: "Draw, Luke." these may well be your last words. When shooting for keeps you want to avoid any semblance of an equal contest. You try to set up the situation so that all of the advantages are in your favor. This book will enable you to analyze the factors that go into a gunfight so that you may manipulate them to your advantage when you have the initiative. You

will also learn how to prepare to overcome advantages your opponent has, if he has stacked the deck in his favor, and how to redress the balance to ensure that you come out on top. Finally you will learn what situations to avoid because you will be in an extremely unfavorable position.

Whatever the situation, it is important to be flexible and to be able to meet each situation on its own merits. Mental constipation can get you killed.

Be prepared to do the unconventional and unexpected, to take your opponent by surprise and to follow through energetically. Remember that you must be fast mentally as well as physically.



Foreword For Police Readers

The value of a book on gunfighting written by a civilian for policemen is likely to be questioned. Actually, there is a great need for precisely such a book for the following reasons:

1. Although it is true that a civilian does lack the day-to-day experience of police work and the special insights that this provides, he can be more objective, not being as intimately involved. He can stand back and take a long view, and do this without having his nose constantly rubbed in the abrasive reality of departmental regulations.

2. A civilian can state explicitly what many policemen merely think, but cannot permit themselves to admit out loud.

3. Certain practices cannot ever be admitted by a police department, as well as by individual policemen. Police agencies must be very circumspect about what they put down in writing as official policy — it might wind up in court some day and they might be open to a lawsuit.

4. Certain topics are just too controversial, and are not even openly discussed among many policemen.

Some of the touchy subjects which will be covered in these pages are: alibi guns, the real reasons for excluding the public from shootouts, and radical methods of search. I will cover when not to take prisoners, and when to take hostages.

It is a fact of life that policemen do, in fact, hold other people's lives in their hands, whether good PR permits admitting it or not. Also rarely admitted is that policemen commit acts that would be crimes if committed by private citizens. Even though they may be authorized by a court order, as in wiretapping, or may be done with judicial cooperation, the act is the same. The judge may look the other way, but a bag

job is breaking and entering. Threatening a suspect with a heavy sentence and promising him a reduced charge if he "cooperates" is still extortion. It is done for a good purpose, and it should be recognized that the police break the law, technically and in fact, every day under carefully controlled conditions for the purpose of enforcing the law. While it is true that the "third degree" and "curbstone justice" are less common than they used to be, they are still necessary at times. The civil libertarians may object, but they do not see the victims of crimes day in and day out.

Nevertheless, a police department cannot openly condone or encourage the use of "alibi guns". A policemen cannot comment or write about them without reflecting adversely on his department, even if he writes unofficially and not in a departmental publication. Bill Jordan, author of *No Second Place Winner*, had to wait until he retired from the Border Patrol to write about alibi guns in his book. If he had written that while a serving officer, the repercussions would have made it very unpleasant for him.

The Gunfighting Environment

Gunfights can occur any place at any time and under any circumstances. They can happen on the street, in a store, out in an open field, or even in your own home.

According to data from the New York City Police Department, which are confirmed by FBI statistics and other authorities, most shootouts happen during the hours of darkness. They tend to happen on a weekend, but not always. Usually, a single policeman faces more than one opponent. The range at which shots are fired is almost always less than seven yards. In fact, it is often within touching distance. The average shots fired by police per shootout is three or less and it's all over within two or three seconds.

A typical shootout occurs like this: You go into a store and there is a stickup in progress. The felon turns and fires at you before you can get your gun out of the holster. If you are lucky he will miss, giving you time to draw and to get behind cover.

Analyzing that situation brings out the point of surprise and its value in a shootout. We will discuss that at length later on. There is also the factor of speed. You do not have much time to think, only to react as you've programmed yourself to do. You will depend heavily on your conditioned reflexes.

There are many common misconceptions about gunfighting. Many of these are spread by novels, movies, television, and even some gun writers. Let's take a long look at what a gunfight is not.

First, it usually is not a protracted pitched battle or chase with dozens of shots fired, as you have seen in western movies or old re-runs of "Gangbusters". Usually the participants do not have time to reload before it's all over.

The winner doesn't holster his gun and walk triumphantly away into the sunset. Nowadays he must make explanations to the police and be prepared to prove that he was legally justified in shooting.

The one who gets shot does not fall down instantly the way he does in the movies. Getting shot is not usually either a clean or fast way to get killed. There is much pain and groaning, and it takes some time for the effect of the wound to become incapacitating or fatal.

You cannot choose to either "shoot to wound" or "shoot to kill". It all happens too fast and there is no time for careful aiming. Your problem will be to shoot to hit.

Often there is no clean and decisive action by the participants but rather a short period of confusion, while they mentally sort out the situation. As in the stickup scenario mentioned earlier, you may not be mentally prepared to fight for your life when you enter the store. You may think: "There's something not right . . . man with a gun . . . why does everybody look so frightened? . . . this is a stickup . . . he's turning . . ."

Fanning the gun, despite what you've seen on TV, is a very inaccurate way of firing. It's fast, but what counts is the first hit, not the first shot fired.

Whoever gets shot does not get up after it's all over to reappear on next week's episode. Gunfighting is for keeps and it is for real and you must be mentally prepared to kill or be killed.

There is also a great difference between shooting for real and competitive "combat" shooting. In real life you do not have custom guns with $400 accuracy jobs nor do you have fancy holsters that are very fast but do not allow you to sit down in a patrol car. If you carry a nickel plated gun it will only make a nice bright target at night. If you attend a "combat" match you will hear contestants brag about their fancy equipment. All of this paraphernalia is taken as "proof" that this sort of fancy equipment is what is needed for combat. Actually, all it proves is what is needed to win "combat" matches. Shootouts on the street are an entirely different matter.

The main differences are:

1. Gunfighting is for keeps.

2. There is a greater element of surprise involved. Nobody will tell you that there are X number of opponents and you have so many seconds to deal with them.

3. Time is very compressed: it happens a lot faster. You or the other one can be dead in just a few seconds.

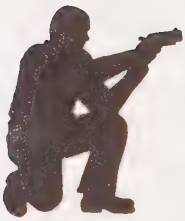
4. The range at which you fire or come under fire is usually much shorter, often just a few feet.

5. The gun is what's available — your service gun or your off-duty one, or even the one you keep in your bedside table.

6. The targets shoot back at you.

7. The circumstances are grimy and sordid, even depressing. Instead of the hygienic atmosphere of a match and the clean smell of the outdoors there is the oppressive, hot air of the city streets and the sharp smell of gasoline. You smell stale beer, sweaty armpits, and the raw odor of human fear.

8. Instead of being in a sterile, isolated environment with your targets, with all spectators safely behind the firing line, there will be bystanders getting in the way, people crowding you, and even some trying to grapple with you. You will not be free to concentrate upon your target because there will be many distractions and obstructions.



PART I.
HARDWARE

1. Handguns

While you may prefer to go into combat armed with a tank, machine gun, or a flamethrower, those things are not usually around when you need them the most so this discussion will deal mainly with small arms. Most of the time you will only have a handgun available because that is the most portable and concealable weapon. In certain circumstances you will have a rifle, shotgun, or carbine at your disposal and you will welcome the additional firepower that they offer.

In gunfighting circles, and particularly among police, a very controversial topic is whether it is better to carry a revolver or an auto pistol. For most policemen, there is little choice, as usually the department prescribes one or the other. Some police departments offer their men a choice. Civilians can get what they prefer. For these reasons, here is a listing of the main differences between revolvers and automatics:

1. The double action revolver is marginally faster on the first shot if fired from the hip. If you take the additional time to bring the pistol up to eye level this advantage is lost, as you then have time to flip off the safety if you have it on your auto pistol or to cock the hammer if it is a single-action auto.

2. The auto pistol can be fired more rapidly in sustained fire and usually hold more cartridges than the revolver.

3. The automatic is faster to reload because all you have to do is to insert a new magazine. Speedloaders for revolvers are awkward compared to auto pistol magazines.

4. Double action revolver shooting is difficult to master. This is unfortunate, as double action shooting is the only way to shoot quickly with a revolver. Cocking for each shot is too slow for most shootouts.

5. A good double action auto will give you a good compromise for the first shot although the double action is not as smooth as that on a good revolver. However, if your target is close up, this will not really matter.

6. Revolvers usually have an internal safety, which disengages when you pull the trigger and is designed to keep the gun from firing except when the trigger is pulled. Auto pistols have manual safeties, as a rule. They must be pushed off with finger pressure before shooting or they must be left off.

In practice, safeties on automatics are a nuisance and should not be used. In the heat of a shootout it is easy to forget to knock the safety off when drawing the weapon. It is possible, by intensive drill, to make removing the safety a conditioned reflex as you draw, but this is an additional complication and has no really useful purpose. It must be practiced often in order not to be forgotten in combat.

The best safety is to keep the muzzle of your pistol pointed in a safe direction and to keep your hand off it when you are not using it. You may choose to keep a single action auto "cocked and locked", that is, hammer cocked and safety on, but a simpler way is to carry it with a round chambered and the hammer down. This is also the best way to carry a double action auto, as the pistol can be fired just by pulling the trigger without the danger involved in a cocked hammer. A manual safety has no purpose on a double action auto except to facilitate uncocking the pistol.

The new breed of European pistols with special uncocking levers offer little but additional complications when the aim should be utmost simplicity.

A grip safety is worse than useless and if your gun has one you should deactivate it. The same goes for a magazine safety. In a real shootout you will grab for your gun as quickly as you can and if your grip is not quite right you might find yourself unable to fire. This can also happen if you have to shoot with the weak hand. By the time you attain the correct pressure to work the grip safety you might have run out of time.

The magazine safety will impede you if you have to fire while in the middle of changing magazines. In a real shootout, you should never get caught with an empty gun. This means that you should change magazines before you have fired your last shot and the slide locks back. That way you always have a round chambered if your opponent tries to rush you while you are reloading. With a magazine safety you are prevented from firing that round unless a magazine is seated in the gun.

Don't believe the old wives' tales that you may hear about auto pistols being prone to jams and revolvers never jamming. It isn't true. The auto pistol, with its fewer moving parts and simpler design, is more reliable. Keep in mind that one of the reasons that the U.S. Army adopted the Colt-Browning back in 1911 was that it proved to be more reliable than revolvers in the Army's tests.

Nevertheless, both revolvers and auto pistols do jam at times. Some of the causes, their prevention, and their remedies are as follows:

A. *Dud round.* You do not know for sure if a particular cartridge will fire until you drop the hammer on it. You can, however, minimize the possibility of having a dud by using only fresh ammunition in the gun you use for real. Whether you use factory ammo or reload, use only cartridges that are relatively new and have been stored in cool dry conditions. If your gun becomes exposed to water, either through immersion or rain, change the cartridges as soon as possible if the water has penetrated. Inspect every round before putting it in the gun or the magazine. If you see any that are corroded, bent, dented, or have any other defect, save them for practice.

If your revolver fails to fire because of a dud simply pull the trigger again. This will rotate the cylinder and bring another cartridge into line. With an auto, if it is a double action auto, pull the trigger again. If it is a single action auto, pull the slide and let it snap forward, bringing another round into the chamber. Often, a dud round is caused by an insensitive primer and a second blow of the hammer will set it off about half the time. This is easy and fast to do with a double action auto pistol but a single action auto must be recocked

manually. You might as well use the time to eject the bad round and put in a new one.

B. *Dirt.* Revolvers are more vulnerable to dirt clogging the works than are autos, with their simpler design and looser tolerances. Dirt or unburned powder are likely to accumulate under the extractor and prevent its seating completely in the cylinder recess. This will prevent closing of the cylinder, in the most extreme cases. If you can close the cylinder, you will find it hard to turn, so hard that it will put you out of action. This can be avoided by cleaning the revolver regularly, whether you think it's dirty or not, and paying particular attention to the vulnerable spots. Test fire any ammunition brand before using it in your gun to determine if it leaves much of a residue which can fall into the mechanism.

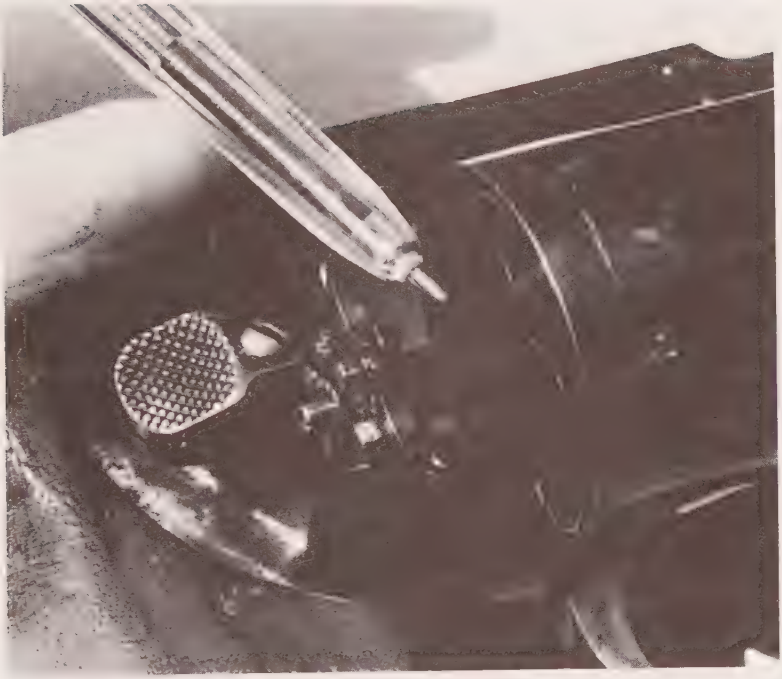
Another place where dirt can cause a malfunction in a revolver is the space between the crane and the frame. Dirt in this spot will prevent closing of the cylinder.

In the field, if your revolver is put out of action by dirt, find some solid cover and do a quick cleaning of the vulnerable spots if time permits. Otherwise draw your backup gun if you have one. If none of this is possible, run like hell.

C. *Bent crane.* This comes from snapping the cylinder shut with a flick of the wrist. Some smart types like to do this showy maneuver, not realizing that it is damaging their guns. If this happens to you out in the field, you are out of action unless you have a second gun available.

D. *High primer.* This can happen in both revolver ammunition and auto pistol cartridges but it affects revolvers much more severely. The high primer rubs against the back plate and impedes the rotation of the cylinder. Sometimes it jams it altogether. In an automatic, the slamming home of the slide will usually drive a high primer home. The fact that in an automatic the cartridge is slammed into the chamber by the recoil action is of great help not only in overcoming defects in the ammunition, such as a high primer or a slightly bent cartridge, but in seating it properly despite dirt in the chamber.

Inspection of ammunition prior to loading it into the gun or duty belt will weed out shells with high primers. If one



Dirt, or grains of unburnt powder, in the extractor recess will prevent the extractor from seating all the way and will make it difficult or impossible to close the cylinder. When forced closed, it will turn with difficulty, if at all.

slips by you and you wind up with a jammed revolver in the field, open up the cylinder and dump the entire load rather than try to take the time to find the bad one. Reload with six fresh ones and keep on shooting.

E. *Failure to feed.* This happens in auto pistols because of bent magazine lips, or in rare instances, a weak magazine spring or dirt in the magazine body. Inspecting your magazines regularly will overcome this problem. Pay particular attention if you drop a magazine. Check it out carefully before using it again; the lips might have been damaged by the fall. Dismantle and clean the magazines of your pistol

A high primer will also make it difficult or impossible to close the cylinder. If the cylinder is forced closed, the high primer may prevent the cylinder from turning at all and jam the gun. High primers cause more difficulty with revolvers than with automatics as the slamming of the auto's slide often seats a high primer to the proper depth. Cartridges with high primers should be discarded rather than used, but can be broken down with a kinetic bullet puller to salvage the powder and brass.

regularly. They collect dust, pants pocket lint, and other dirt that can gum them up.

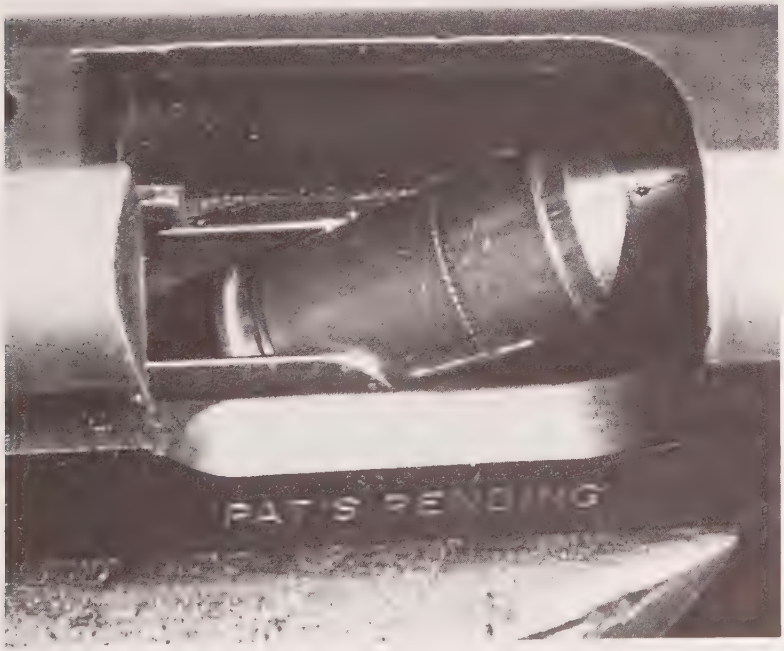
If you jam in the field due to a bad magazine, discard it and take another. You should always carry two spares, anyway.

F. *Cocked round.* This failure to feed is caused by a round coming part way out of the magazine and catching at an angle on the edge of the chamber, jamming there and refusing to go in any further. This can be caused by defective ammo, bent magazine lips, or a feed ramp that is not proper-

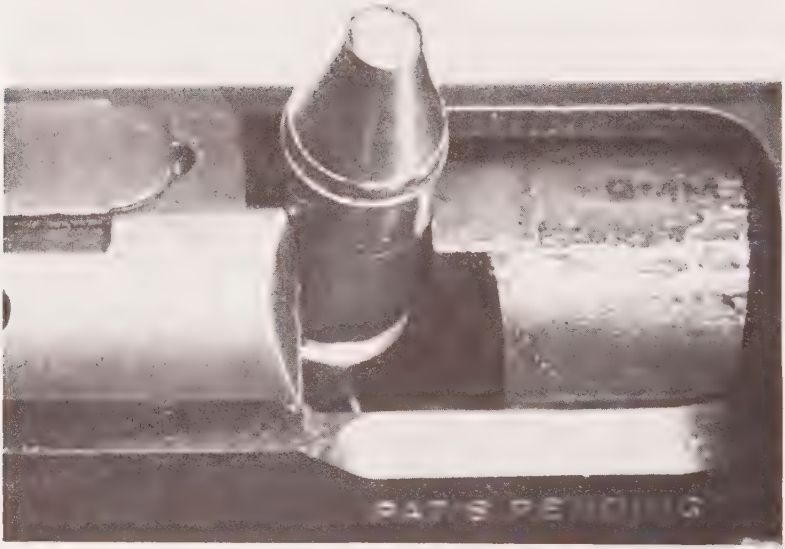
ly polished. Prevention consists in taking good routine care of your pistol and inspecting it regularly, when you clean it. Test fire it regularly too. This will uncover problems such as these.

To clear a cocked round in the field, turn the pistol upside down and work the slide. The cocked round should fall clear and another round should chamber.

G. *Smokestacking.* This can be caused by magazine lips that are deformed, allowing the cartridge to come up vertically before feeding into the throat of the chamber. A fired case can smokestack too, preventing the slide from closing. This can be caused by a weak extractor or a cartridge that did not have a full charge in it, thereby failing to supply enough



A "cocked round" is shown above. A similar jam can occur when the round "nose dives" downward. These jams are usually caused by magazine or feed ramp problems.



Smokestacking results when a cartridge lodges upright in the ejection port, jamming the pistol. If it happens while feeding, as above, the problem is probably with the magazine.

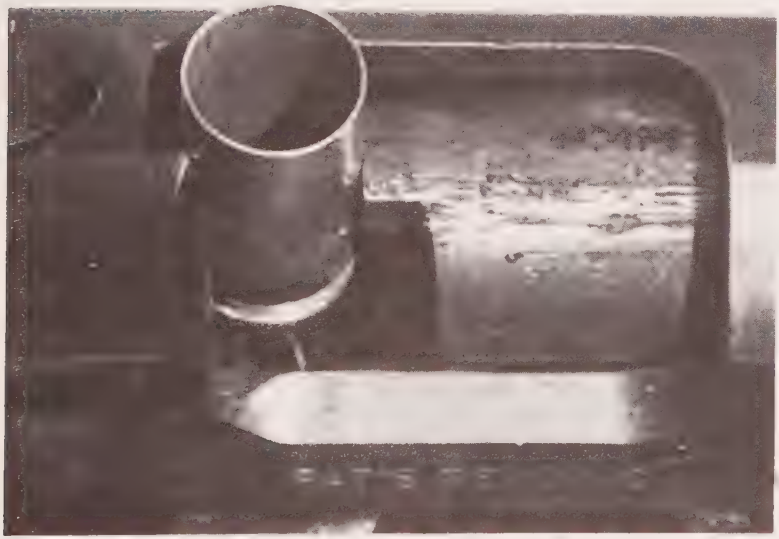
recoil impulse to push the slide all the way back. The prevention and cure are the same as for a cocked round.

H. *Failure to pick up a round from the magazine.* This can be caused by a weak round failing to drive the slide back far enough to strip another shell from the magazine. It can also happen as a result of the magazine not being fully seated or the magazine lips being bent. If this happens to you in the field work the slide and resume firing. If it is due to the magazine not being fully seated, press it gently into place with the heel of your other hand.

I. *Failure to eject or extract fired cases.* This can happen in both revolvers and automatics. In an auto, the most likely causes are a weak cartridge or a broken extractor. Dirt or a rough chamber can cause it too. In a revolver it usually is due

to a roughly finished cylinder that has the insides of the chambers showing tool marks that impede the extraction of the fired cases. Firing overloaded ammo in a revolver can also cause this, as the cases expand so far that they become a press fit in the chambers. Test firing will usually reveal these faults and they should not happen to you in the field. Sometimes you can pick out the fired case or cases by hand. If so, you can continue firing. If not, go for your backup gun.

There are many other things that can go wrong with a gun but it is not practical to list them here, as there is little that you can do about them in the heat of a gunfight. For



If smokestacking occurs with a fired case, check both the magazine and the extractor. It may be broken or have a weak spring. Another possibility is an underloaded cartridge that did not push the slide all the way back. In each case the best way to clear the jam is to turn the gun upside down and work the slide, bringing a fresh round into the chamber after the stuck one has fallen out.

example, if a weak cartridge sends a bullet only halfway up the barrel, you cannot take it out without tools of some sort — at least a cleaning rod. You are not likely to have one or the time to use one in the middle of a shootout.

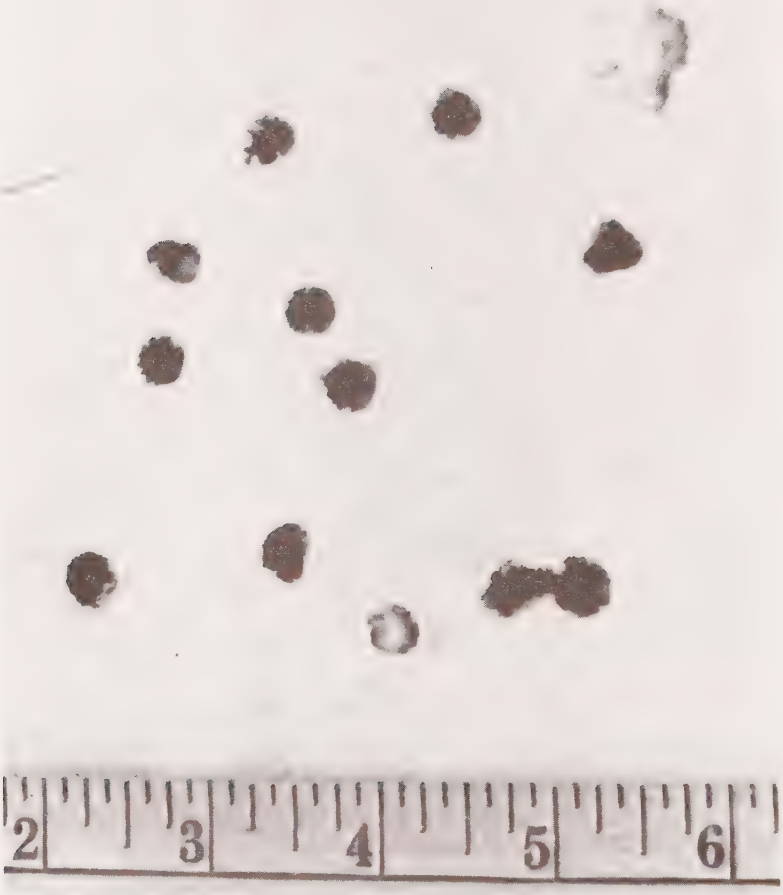
2. Shotguns

A shotgun gives you more firepower than a pistol. That is its main advantage. It is larger, almost impossible to conceal, heavy to carry, and slower to reload than a pistol. Still, in many situations, such as responding to a stickup call, you will feel more comfortable if you have a shotgun in a dashboard bracket in your car.

It is generally accepted, but not always true, that the wounding power of a shotgun blast will incapacitate an opponent more and faster than the bullet from any pistol. This is because a shotgun fires multiple projectiles. Getting hit by the full charge from a load of twelve gauge 00 Buckshot is like getting hit by nine thirty-eight caliber bullets at the same time. Nine such hits in the torso are usually fatal. A shotgun slug is almost as frightening. It makes a huge hole of approximately sixty-nine caliber, in a twelve gauge. A load of No. 8 bird shot is scarcely more comforting. At a range of ten or fifteen feet it makes a large "rat-hole" wound that is as dangerous and nasty as it looks and is terribly destructive of tissue.

The muzzle energy of a twelve gauge shotgun, depending on the load, is from 1500 to about 2000 foot/pounds. This is a lot more than any pistol you are likely to have or encounter. Yes, I know that there are some .44 Mags around but there are not many people who can fire them accurately using full power ammunition. Therefore we can exclude these from consideration.

If you intend to use a shotgun you should conduct some tests to see how it patterns. This will tell you how many pellets will hit a man-sized target at various ranges. All things considered, you will find that the effective range of a shotgun is about that of a pistol — under a hundred yards.



Number 00 Buckshot makes this pattern at 10 feet when fired from a riot gun. This was a Magnum load, with twelve pellets and it is usually lethal when it hits the torso. The spread of the shot makes for multiple injuries, which enhances the effect.

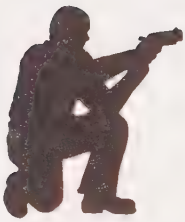
Other advantages of using a shotgun are:

Intimidation. Often an opponent will be more receptive to an appeal for his surrender if he is looking down the business end of a shotgun held in your hands.

Fewer legal restrictions. This is very important for civilians who live in areas that have strict gun laws. Often, pistols are the first to be proscribed; shotguns the last.

Easier shot placement. Because the shotgun fires multiple projectiles that tend to spread with greater range, it is easier to hit with a shotgun.

Reduced penetration. Buckshot penetrates less than a bullet of the same diameter. This is important if you are using a shotgun in an urban environment. You do not want to risk the lives of innocent people any more than you have to. Missed shots going through walls and killing an innocent person happens at times. Using a shotgun minimizes the chances of this happening to you.



3. Rifles And Carbines

Rifles and carbines have their place. Their main advantage is the one of range. When your opponent is some distance away from you, say fifty yards or more, the advantage of a long-barrelled weapon makes itself felt. The most common use of a rifle in combat, apart from the military, is in SWAT or anti-sniper work,

There are two basic types of rifle or carbine that we must consider. One is the heavy barrelled, scope sighted, bolt action rifle that is the weapon of choice for anti-sniper shooting at long ranges. This weapon is chosen for its accuracy at the expense of everything else. It may be very heavy. It may be encumbered with a bipod or a tripod. It has its use as long as it can be used to place shots with pinpoint accuracy at a range of hundreds of yards. In practical terms this means hitting a suspect in the head at a range of three or four hundred yards.

There are several good rifles that are capable of this sort of accuracy but they will rarely be used in such cliffhanger situations as taking out a suspect who has hostages, if the range is very great. This is because of the uncertainties of wind drift. A slight breeze can spoil an attempt at a head shot at long ranges. For example, a 180 grain caliber .308 boat-tail bullet, one of the best and most stable of the long-range bullets available, will be blown off its course about four and one half inches at four hundred yards by even a five mile per hour breeze. That is at a muzzle velocity of 3200 feet per second, which is unrealistically high. At a lower velocity the effect of wind will be far greater.

The other type of long arm that has great usefulness is the light carbine with a large magazine capacity. One of the

best examples of this type is the Ruger Mini-14. Dollar for dollar and ounce for ounce it is hard to surpass. The purpose of such a weapon is to deliver a large volume of fire at moderately long ranges and also up close if need be. The weapon is usually equipped only with iron sights. A twenty or thirty round magazine is common. In practical terms, with such a weapon you can expect to hit a man sized target at three hundred yards most of the time. Of course there are variables. There will always be the virtuoso shot who can hit something the size of an egg at five hundred yards. There is also the inept person who cannot hit a barn from the inside.

The effect of wind will be more pronounced on the light bullet that this carbine fires. Assuming a muzzle velocity of 3000 FPS (ignore the factory figures, this is what actually happens) and aiming at the center of the body, you can hit a man in a five mile per hour breeze at three hundred yards. You can do the same in a ten to twelve mile per hour breeze at two hundred yards without correcing for windage, and even a thirty mile per hour wind will not cause you to miss at one hundred yards.

The semi-auto carbine's capacity for rapid fire makes it very useful close up, as in ambush or stickup situations. It is versatile enough to permit you to engage multiple targets at various ranges.

For best results, naturally, the rifle or carbine should be fired from a prone or a supported position. This is not a disadvantage, as you are thereby taking advantage of cover and making yourself as small a target as possible.

4. Calibers

Which caliber is the best? To properly answer that question we must know the rest of it — best for what? As a rule you want the largest caliber that you can handle easily and accurately. When choosing a caliber, also keep in mind the old saying: "I'd rather be missed by a forty-five than hit by a twenty-two." It's still true today. Never underrate the smaller calibers.

Your choice of caliber will be influenced by other factors. "Stopping power" is just one. Another is concealability. The milieu in which you will be operating is another. If you are in a rural area you may want a heavier caliber noted for it's longer range, such as the .357 Magnum. If you are selecting a gun to keep in a nightstand you will probably pick a caliber that won't go through three walls after nailing your intruder. Bullet type will be a factor. You might want high-speed hollow points for their well-known destructive power and their low penetration.

Another factor to consider is availability and cost of ammunition for your gun. In order to become a good shot and to remain one, you have to practice regularly. If you have limited ammunition you will practice less. Center-fire ammunition is prohibitively expensive to shoot unless you reload or unless you are rich. If you don't reload you might choose the .22 Long Rifle as your caliber. Granted that it is not a very powerful cartridge but many people have been killed with it and it is better to be proficient with a smaller weapon than inept with a larger one.

The .22 Long Rifle is a special case and deserves a separate discussion. Although it is a puny shell compared with its bigger cousins it has so many virtues that a good case can be made for it.

First, it is cheap. The guns made for it and the ammunition itself do not cost very much and are in everyone's price range. If the choice, whether the purpose is self-defense or survival, is between the .22 and no gun at all, you're obviously better off with a .22. Even buying a firearm of a larger caliber does you no good if you don't have the money to feed it.

Secondly, because of its low noise and recoil, it is easy to learn to shoot well. It is easier to maintain your skill with it too.

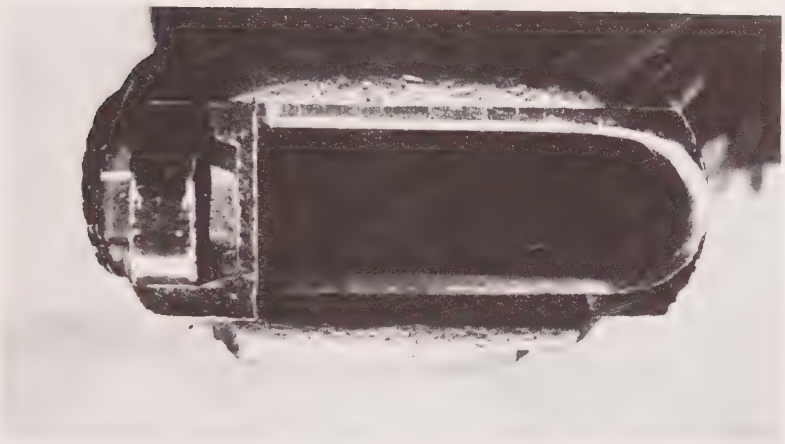
Thirdly, it is light and compact. You can carry a large quantity of ammunition for it. One hundred rounds weighs only 12.4 ounces. Compare that with the three pounds plus that one hundred rounds of .38 Special ammunition weighs.

Finally, it is easy to shoot accurately and quickly in a tight situation. If you have any doubts about its "stopping power" it is easy to deliver two or three quick shots to your opponent's one, if he is armed with a larger caliber. Two or three .22 caliber holes in the torso will put almost anybody down.

In shotguns the standard seems to be the twelve gauge and the problem of ammunition availability is the best reason for using that size. However, if all you have is a sixteen gauge, it is not that much more feeble that your opponent will face it fearlessly.

In rifles the two most popular calibers seem to be the .308 and the .223. This does not mean that the other calibers are worthless, if you happen to have one of them. For long-range shooting a lot can be said for the .270 and the 8mm Remington Magnum, to name only two. If all you have in a light carbine is a .30-30 don't rush to throw it into the junk-pile. Although technically obsolete the .30-30 has proven itself through the years. The bottom line seems to be; "It's not what you've got; it's what you do with it that counts." You adjust your tactics to suit the weapon at hand.

Speed of reloading is an important factor in choosing a weapon but it seems to get the most attention in the case of the pistol. Unquestionably the automatic is superior for delivering a heavy volume of sustained fire. The automatic holds



Chamfering the mouth of the magazine well is the way to make reloading a shade quicker by easing the path of the magazine as you insert it. This is most important in pistols which have straight-sided magazines. It is far less important in the ones which have tapered, double-column magazines (Smith & Wesson Model 59, Browning Hi-Power, Beretta Model 92, etc.). The taper eases the path of the magazine whether or not the mouth of the magazine well is chamfered.

more cartridges than the revolver and it is easier and faster to reload despite the advent of "speed loaders" for revolvers. In fact, the trend is toward the fourteen shot automatic. That, and two magazines, holds nearly a box of ammunition, which is quite a lot.

Realistically, speed of reloading is not as important as it seems. It is mainly in matches that you get to fire almost a box of ammunition in one day. Most combat matches are designed for the automatic pistol and against the revolver, as they have many stages which require that more than six shots be fired. "Speed loaders" for revolver are mainly useful in matches, where they help revolvers compete against automatics.

In real life, if you need more than six shots to do the job it can mean one of several things:

The correct stock angle makes pointing a pistol almost as easy as pointing your index finger. Notice that a pen held in this hand makes the same angle with the index finger as the barrel of the pistol does with the grip. The pistol in this case is the High Standard Supermatic .22. While most people would not consider this a suitable gun for a shootout, it can be pointed quickly and accurately. Stingers come out of the barrel at about 1250 fps, enough to do a lot of damage. The magazine holds 10 rounds. This pistol has the same profile and natural-pointing grip angle that made the Luger so popular.

A) You've been missing. What makes you think you'll do any better with the second load?

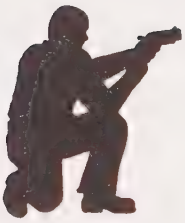
B) You're so badly outnumbered that they'll get you anyway. This is very unpleasant to contemplate.

C) You need just one more shot to tidy up the job, for example, shooting at a getaway car or pumping an extra one into an opponent who's already down to ensure that he won't get up and pop one at you as you approach him.

Generally speaking, in a shootout if you can't handle the problem with five or six shots you've got more trouble than you can handle. That's when you'd best take cover and wait for the commotion to attract some help. Whatever you do, don't stand up to reload.

Another factor, one which is rarely discussed, is that of stock angle and fit to the human hand. You will notice that some pistols fit your hand better than others and seem to point naturally at what you are trying to hit. This is because they fit your hand better. The critical part of the fit is called the stock angle. This is the angle between the barrel and the stock, or handle.

You may have noticed that if you close your eyes and point your index finger at where you remember something to be, when you open your eyes you will find that your index finger is usually pointing right where you want it. Now if you take a pencil and clasp it in your hand while pointing your index finger at somebody or something you will find that the pencil makes an angle of between twenty and forty degrees with your index finger. This is the ideal stock angle for you. The grip of the pistol you choose should be as close to this angle as possible. Then you will find that pointing that pistol is as easy and natural as pointing your index finger and you will have gained an important advantage in teaching yourself to shoot by "reflexive pointing" or "directed fire", as it is sometimes called.



5. Holsters

The fancy competition holsters that you may have seen at matches or in a store have no place in shooting for real. You will be wearing a street holster or perhaps none at all. You may be wearing a holster that is designed for concealment rather than speed. If you have a choice of holster and the position in which you wear it, you will find that a plain holster located on or just in front of your hip will give you the best speed of draw. Cross-draw holsters are a worthless complication and are actually slower, as your hand has to go a longer distance to find the gun and then you must pivot the gun around as well as raise the muzzle to bring it to bear on your opponent. In addition, a premature pressure on the trigger may cause a shot to go in the direction of your partner if he is standing on your left.

If you have more than one holster practice with the one that you will be wearing on the street. If you are a police officer and you can get away with it, keep your holster unsnapped. This will speed up your draw. If you have to run you can always snap it.

If you are interested in developing your skill at quick draw the best book on the subject is the one by Bill Jordan, *No Second Place Winner.* The author, a former Border Patrolman, is an authority on gunfighting in general and the quick draw in particular.

The fastest draw of all, however, is to have the gun already in your hand when trouble starts. Don't risk your life unnecessarily by delaying your draw in a dangerous situation. Sometimes just the sight of a gun in your hand will cool things down, obviating the need to open fire.

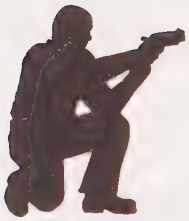
Whenever you draw your gun you may be worried about

Illustrated above is a simple, practical holster that is suitable for almost any use. Note the open bottom. No dirt can accumulate in this holster.

The safety strap on this holster should satisfy any department's regulation and the holster is comfortable to wear when seated in an automobile.

Practical? It certainly is! It isn't elegant or stylish, it's positively sacrilegious to someone who likes well-decorated leather, but it works. A large automatic, such as the Smith & Wesson Model 59, can be carried comfortably for hours if need be. A smaller pistol, such as a Chief or Walther PPK, can be carried completely inside the pocket for good concealability. A pocket is a perfect place for a backup gun. It will do very well for your primary weapon, too, unless you are wearing a uniform.

the legal consequences of a shooting. Unless you are in an isolated spot you have little chance of escaping the necessity of explaining and justifying your actions to the police afterward. At the risk of oversimplification and without any intention of encouraging reckless shooting, would you rather be tried by twelve or carried by six?



6. The Myth Of Parity

Some gun writers mention being "outgunned". This is based on the tacit assumption that both you and your opponent should be armed with the same caliber in order to give you a fair chance. As a corollary, any disparity should be in your favor. This attitude shows an unjustified preoccupation with the hardware rather than the tactics of a shootout and it also shows that the author doesn't really understand what goes on in a gunfight.

In fact, caliber is not as important as getting the first hit. If you have a .22 and your opponent has a .38, a hit with that .22 on his gun arm will impair his shooting and somewhat cancel out the advantage he supposedly enjoys. A hit in the head will probably cancel him out altogether, even if it is only with a .22.

Caliber must be judged in the context of the situation. A small caliber pistol, considered a toy by some, is really a deadly weapon and it is as deadly as the person using it. The most powerful weapon does you no good unless you can hit with it.

The automatic pistol's large ammunition supply will make you feel more comfortable in a shootout but don't forget that most gunfights are over before six shots have been fired. If a revolver is all you have don't feel too badly. It isn't obsolete yet: in fact, you could even make a good case for the single-action revolver in certain situations.

There are only a few specific ways that a disparity in weapons can be significant:

1. *Range.* If your opponent is armed with a weapon that outranges yours AND there is enough distance between you

so that he can reach you but your weapon cannot reach him, then you are at a disadvantage.

2. *Penetrating power.* If his weapon can penetrate your cover but yours cannot penetrate his, then you are in a bad situation. This disadvantage can be nullified if you can get to better cover, though.

3. *Surviving the first hit.* A hit in a non-vital area by a less powerful weapon is less likely to be disabling than a hit with a more powerful weapon. This may allow your opponent to keep on resisting even though you have hit him. This is a problem that can be handled, however, if you keep behind cover and wait for the shock and blood loss to catch up to him. Meanwhile he will be fighting at reduced effectiveness and you may be able to place your next shot where it will do more good.

4. *Too powerful a weapon.* The more powerful the weapon, the more skill is needed to control it and to score hits with it. If your adversary has misjudged his skill and armed himself with a weapon that is too powerful for him, then he is overgunned and you have the advantage if he doesn't hit you by accident.

5. *Gross disparity in firepower.* A pistol vs. machine gun encounter can be very problematic and should be avoided if possible. Still, a lot depends upon the circumstances. If you are caught in the open by an enemy armed with a Schmeisser, he will cut you in half almost before you can get your gun unholstered, assuming that he knows how to use it. However, if you have good cover and he doesn't, you are not overmatched.

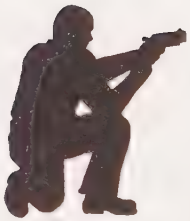
In that connection, a submachinegun can be very impressive although it is a truism among knowledgeable gun owners that it is very hard to hit something with a submachinegun except in carefully aimed short bursts. Still, if you are besieged and you have a submachinegun, a couple of bursts in their direction will teach them a lot of respect and make them keep their heads down even if you don't hit any of them. If you didn't have the submachinegun they might have elected to rush you in the knowledge that you couldn't get them all before they got you. In that respect a psychological advantage can become a real one when it serves as a deterrent.

7. Backup Guns

Some people carry a second weapon, a so-called "back-up" gun. It may be carried in a second holster, a pocket, or tucked into a boot or belt. It is usually a small and concealable weapon and its use is reserved for certain specific situations:

1. If your service weapon is lost, dropped, or taken from you.
2. If your gun jams and cannot be cleared.
3. If you run out of ammunition for your main weapon.
4. As a throwaway. This is a touchy and controversial subject, as its use is strictly illegal. For those who may not be familiar with the term, a throwaway, or alibi gun, is one that is planted on the body of someone whom you have just shot without justification. If, for example, your gun goes off accidentally while you are confronting a suspect, you can save yourself from prosecution only if you claim that he drew a weapon on you and that you fired in self-defense. Hence the small, untraceable pistol.

You might not be able to get an untraceable gun, or at least one that cannot be traced to you. Most policemen find this no problem. They simply hold back a weapon they confiscate from a suspect. It is probably stolen anyway and the suspect won't be asking for it back, especially in a locale where the possession of an unlicensed gun is illegal. If you cannot get an untraceable gun, a knife or even a toy gun that looks real will do to establish legal justification for you. As long as it looks like a deadly weapon you won't be expected to be shot first before shooting back. If you are a civilian this may be the only way open for you.



8. Choosing Your Ammo

The Law Enforcement Assistance Administration tested almost every brand and type of ammunition available and came to the conclusion that the high-speed hollow points are the most lethal. The only exception was something called the Glaser Safety Slug and this is not commonly available. In addition it has a couple of shortcomings. It is very frangible. No test was made against a target wearing a heavy overcoat but there is reason to believe that even heavy clothing, let alone an armored vest, would seriously degrade its effectiveness.

If you load your own ammunition you can usually cook up something that will be a considerable improvement over factory ballistics.

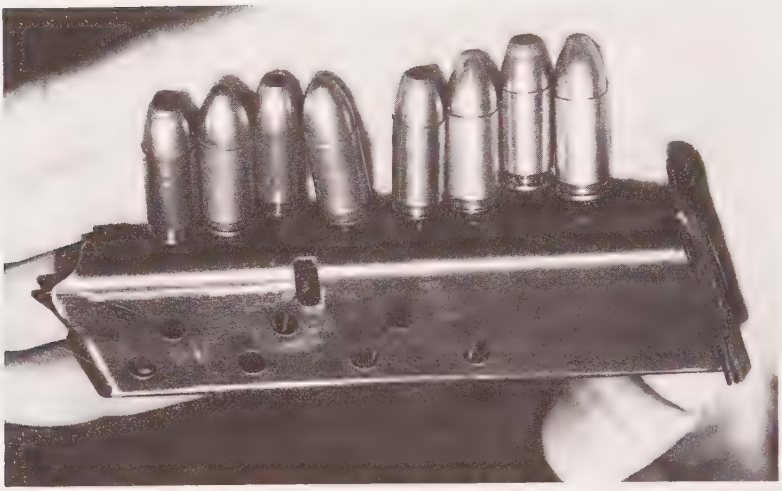
There are several subtle points to choosing ammunition that are usually overlooked even by people who consider themselves well-informed. Any ammunition that you intend to use should first be tested before you carry it into a situation in which your life would depend on it.

Accuracy is an important point. This will be much more important for a rifle than for a pistol, because of the different conditions of their use, but it is still important. The ammunition must be accurate enough for your purpose at the range at which you expect to fire it. It must be compatible with the gun you use.

Another factor is reliability. Do you get any misfires?

A third point is rarely noted — ease of extraction of fired cases. If they hang up this can cause you serious problems in a gunfight.

Finally, how prominent is the muzzle flash? Is it subdued or is it bright enough to blind you temporarily at night?



The eight rounds in this magazine are Dutch-loaded. This configuration is one high speed hollow point and one metal-piercing round loaded alternately. The plan in this case is to fire in bursts of two, sending one of each type towards each target. At least one of the pair should do the job; the hollow point doing the most damage to an unprotected opponent while the metal-piercing round will get through to an adversary behind a wall or wearing an armored vest.

DUTCH LOADS

You may choose to use a mixed bag of ammunition in your gun because you don't know what situation you may be facing when you're called upon to use it. If you are a policeman this will probably be forbidden by regulations that specify that you may only use issue ammo in your weapon. However, if you feel that your life is very important and that you'd rather face disciplinary measures if caught than an inspector's funeral after you get killed, then you may want to use unauthorized ammo, switching loads after you leave the police station. You still run the risk of getting caught in a surprise inspection but if you feel strongly enough about it this should be a worthwhile risk for you.

One possible sequence of loads you might choose would be:

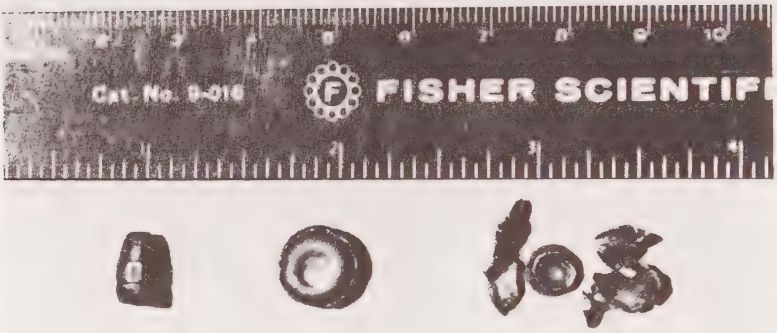
Two or three high speed hollow points first. This would be because you are most likely to need strictly anti-personnel loads first in a shootout. In cases where you just have time to draw and fire it usually means that your opponent is right up close to you and you want the most deadly loads to fall under the hammer first. If you have a revolver you might choose to make these the notorious hollow base wadcutters loaded backwards. They rip, tear, and shred tissue even at moderate velocities. These have little accuracy but they are quite accurate enough when the encounter is toe-to-toe.

The next two chambers in your cylinder or the next two rounds in line in your magazine might be heavy soft-point ammunition. This will pierce doors and interior walls better than the more expanding bullets and yet will still make a nasty wound in your opponent. These rounds are to deal with the possibility that your enemy has ducked behind something or that you have to shoot an accomplice who is a bit further away.

Last in line might be two or more rounds of full jacketed or metal piercing loads. You might have to fire at felons fleeing in a car or at a barricaded suspect.

THE NEW .22 HIGH-PERFORMANCE CARTRIDGES

Several years ago the .22 Stinger came on the market, offering a light, 29 grain bullet in front of a heavier powder charge. The remarkable thing about the Stinger was that the advertisements for it were not exaggerations — the bullets mushroomed to the diameter of a .45 and transmitted most of their energy to the target. The great success of this load prompted other manufacturers to bring out their own versions of the Stinger. A couple of these are named the Yellowjacket and the Expediter. They all work about the same and the slight differences in speed or bullet weight between them is not enough to be significant. Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.



Expansion characteristics of Stingers are illustrated above, shown actual size. The bullet at far left was fired from a Sterling Model 302 with a 2" barrel. Chronographed muzzle velocity was 915 fps, not enough to cause expansion when fired into water for expansion tests. In tissue, however, it would probably perform somewhat better even though 900 to 1,000 fps seems to be the threshold of expansion for this bullet, as it is for many hollow points. The center bullet came out of a 4" barrelled pistol at 1250 fps and expanded to about the diameter of a .45 slug, as can be seen from the photo. The fragments on the right came out of a Ruger 10/22 at 1500 fps and broke up in water. The multiple missiles created by this fragmentation would do more damage than a single one in living tissue. Several dozen yards down range the bullet would still have enough velocity to expand reliably. Barrel length means a lot!

The Stinger-class cartridges enhance the deadliness of a pistol or rifle chambered for the .22 Long Rifle beyond what was possible before. This does not mean that it will turn your little .22 pocket pistol into a .45 but it does mean that your .22 is much more formidable a weapon with Stinger-type rounds in it.

In tests, the .22 Stinger turned out to be more destructive at close ranges than the .22 Magnum cartridge, probably because its bullet mushrooms better.

One word of caution is necessary, though. The Stinger-type cartridges develop their potential best in longer barrelled weapons. For example, out of a sixteen-inch barrel, the .22 LR comes out at about 1200-1300 feet per second, while the Stinger develops over 1500 fps. From the two inch barrel of a small pocket pistol, such as the Sterling, the regular ammo in one test chronographed out at about 900 fps. The Stingers came out barely 50 fps faster. This is a slight advantage when coupled with a light expanding bullet but the superiority of the Stingers shows up better when fired from a pistol with a somewhat longer barrel, such as a Walther PP or a 6" barrelled Beretta Jaguar. In fact, Stingers fired out of a Jaguar equalled the velocity of regular .22 LR high speed ammo fired from a rifle with a sixteen-inch barrel.

POISONED BULLETS

Despite an initial aversion to the idea of poisoned bullets an objective examination of the facts reveals several reasons for using them in certain circumstances:

1. Poison takes a long time to act compared to the compressed timespan of a typical gunfight. Still, poison can be worthwhile for the sake of revenge. Your opponent may have inflicted a fatal wound on you while you may have only nicked him but if you've hit him with a poisoned bullet you will have taken him with you.

2. Your intention in shooting may be to protect your family or to keep your adversary from carrying out a crime. A poisoned bullet will stop him from doing anything else after the shootout, even if he kills you.

3. There may be a pause in the action, while both parties scramble for cover or reload after an initial exchange of fire. You may both be wounded. If you've hit him with a poisoned bullet any delay will be in your favor as the poison acts. He won't be getting up to fight again.

The widespread availability of hollow-point bullets presents us with the opportunity of putting a pellet of poison in the cavity to enhance their deadliness. Some poisons which would be suitable are:

Potassium or Sodium Cyanide, obtainable from a photographic or chemical supply house.

Succinylcholine chloride, sometimes known as Anectine. This acts like curare, paralyzing the muscles, including the heart and respiratory muscles if the dose is right. If you have a friendly local pharmacist he can supply you, for while this is a prescription drug it is not tightly controlled as are the narcotics.

Nicotine Sulfate. This used to be available in garden shops and nurseries. It is an insecticide, but because of new Federal laws it is becoming much harder to get. Still, you might be lucky and find an old bottle of it on a shelf somewhere.

Warfarin. This is a rat poison that works by stopping the clotting action of the blood. You can get it from a professional exterminator supply house. A wound with some of this in it will result in a hemorrhage.

You may have heard the old stories about the Mafia smearing garlic on bullets to induce blood poisoning. This is nonsense. Even if it worked, blood poisoning takes too long to kill.

9. Special Purpose Weapons

SILENCERS

Another useful device from the department of dirty tricks is the silencer. However, it should be noted at the outset that silencers do not silence weapons. They muffle the sound to some extent, as the muffler on a car or motorcycle does. Secondly, making or owning a silencer may bring you some complications with the law. Why bother, then? Why fool around with what is usually considered to be only an assissin's weapon?

In some situations you might find it advantageous to have a somewhat less noisy weapon. If you are in a night encounter you'll find that a silencer also hides the flash of your weapon. This will be very useful to avoid giving away your position, particularly if the locale is noisy. You may remain undetected for some time.

Silencers have their disadvantages. They add to the bulk of your weapon. They only silence the escaping gases. They do not do anything for the sonic crack of a supersonic bullet, such as that fired from a rifle. There are no holsters made for guns with attached silencers. There is no practical silencer made for a shotgun.

Only certain weapons are suitable for the fitting of silencers. These usually are pistols that fire their bullet at subsonic speed and are capable of taking a silencer fitting. The pistol should have a protruding barrel, as on the High-Standard automatics, the Ruger auto pistol, or the Beretta Jaguar. There has to be a fitting or collet to attach the silencer to the pistol and this makes it impractical to try to fit a silencer to a pistol where the barrel is completely enclosed

A neat backup weapon is the shrouded icepick, which you should be able to pick up at the supermarket for under a dollar. However, by the time you read this the word may have gotten around and they may be sold out or more expensive. They are made in Hong Kong and when closed look a lot like a judo stick, and may be used the same way.

Pull off the shroud and you have a stiletto that will easily slip between your opponent's ribs. A quick thrust up into the eyeball will pierce the thin bone of the eye cavity and reach the brain. This is something to look out for when searching a suspect.

by the slide, such as the M1911 or the Smith & Wesson M39. You could have a custom barrel fitted, one that has an extra inch or so. You could even have the extension threaded to easily accept a fitting, but this would be a dead giveaway that would betray the fact that you had a silencer.

For the pistols which are easy to adapt a silencer is very easy to make. A lawnmower engine muffler, available at a hardware store, is your starting point. You drill a hole slightly larger than the size of the bullet through the central baffle, so that the bullet can pass unobstructed. Then you fill the body of the muffler with a copper scouring pad or even plain steel wool. The threaded end of the muffler fits a standard fitting which, with a bit of filing, can be made to fit the barrel of your automatic. It can be held in place with a clamp or a set screw and the total cost is in the five dollar bracket. You must, however, be handy with small tools.

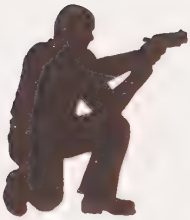
FLARE GUNS

Flare guns are light, cheap, single shot devices that fire a pellet of magnesium to an altitude of three or four hundred feet into the air for signalling purposes. The pellet burns at 5000 degrees Fahrenheit, enough to start a fire or to devastate an opponent if fired into his body.

Flare guns have no sights, are not made for accuracy, and are not strong enough to fire conventional ammunition, which develops more chamber pressure than flare cartridges. For short range personal defense, or for starting a fire to flush out a barricaded opponent, they are a light, cheap, and easily available expedient.

The cheapest one around is the "Penguin", which sells as a kit for around ten dollars. For that you get the device itself and five flares. The Penguin looks like a rather fat pen, is very slow to load, and fires with a thumb-operated release. For more money you can get flare guns that look like pistols. They are made in twelve-gauge and forty millimeter, and sell for upwards of twenty dollars. For near a hundred dollars you can get a Heckler and Koch flare gun, which does exactly the same as the others.

Flare guns will send their incendiary projectiles a couple of hundred feet horizontally, with a trajectory that looks like a rainbow. Still, they can be used effectively from close up.



PART II.
HUMAN FACTORS

10. Yourself

How will you react in a shootout? You surely are asking yourself this if you seriously contemplate getting into a firefight. If you have been in the armed forces and been in combat you already know.

If you are like other people, the answer may be discouraging. When in danger we all get frightened. Few of us have ice water in our veins. General S.L.A. Marshall, in his classic study of WWII combat, found that only a small proportion of American soldiers even fired their weapons when under enemy fire. In a recent article in *Police Marksman* magazine, we learn that even in police situations some people will not be able to fire back at an assailant. Freezing up mentally happens to some people.

The physiological reactions to fear are also real. When in a real gunfight, with bullets cutting the air around you, you will find that your hands may be shaking. This is the real reason that so many people prefer the two-handed hold. Vomiting is another physical reaction to extreme fear. Some people defecate in their pants. This sort of reaction is common in combat, as a candid conversation with an old army man will reveal to you.

Unfortunately, the psychological effects can be almost as devastating as being hit by a bullet. If you find that your hands shake or that you have let go in your pants don't let it cramp your style. Your opponent has probably done it too. Even if it upsets you keep your mind on your shooting or you won't live to clean up.

You must be mentally prepared for the prospect of shooting to kill. If you anticipate getting into a firefight it probably is for a good reason and you have good justification

for taking a human life. Perhaps you will be defending your family, yourself, or if you are a policeman, society in general.

You must be prepared to kill. Don't go into a gunfight with the idea that you will only disable your adversary or that you will shoot him only a little bit. If you are not mentally prepared to kill, stay out of gunfights, period.

Try to avoid panic in a shootout. This is easier said than done. Keep in mind that your opponent is probably as scared as you are. If you know what you are doing and go about doing it you will find that the gunfight is over before you have time to be afraid. It is mainly when you don't have a clear idea of what to do that you are susceptible to panic.

In effect, the emotional reaction catches up to you after the shooting is over. Then, and only then, do you have the time to think about all the awful things that might have happened to you. The emotional after-effects of a shootout can be serious but if you have gone into it confident in your own mind that you had good reason to kill and risk being killed, it will be a lot easier to bear. The time to think about the after-effects is before you ever get into a shootout. If you don't have the emotional stamina then stay out of shootouts.

The fear of getting shot is a real one. Getting shot can be painful, disabling, or fatal. However, the odds are with you. Most gunshot wounds are not fatal. According to Paul Weston, author of *Combat Shooting For Police*, five out of six policemen who get shot do survive the experience. Being disabled by your own fear is, in reality, a greater danger than being disabled by your enemy's fire.

Confidence will go a long way towards preparing you to fight for your life with a gun. You gain self-confidence by learning what to do, by practicing it, and by seeing your proficiency improve steadily as you learn and practice.

It is quite likely that if you fire informally with friends or attend "combat" matches you will become discouraged to find that you are not as proficient as others. This is the wrong way to look at it. If you want to develop your skill don't compete against others — compete against yourself. Ask yourself: "Did I do better this time than last time?"

Usually the answer will be yes and you will find that you are making constant progress.

One useful trick in practicing is to fire after you have run a hundred yards as fast as you can. This will give you a good idea of what it's like to shoot when your heart is racing, you're short of breath, and your hands are trembling. It is a good simulation of the fear reaction and will enable you to understand why at least half the shots fired in shootouts miss. It is not easy to get hits, even close up, when you are shaking. In real life you may have to chase your opponent several hundred yards before the firefight starts. That will only add to the effect.

Another part of becoming proficient at gunfighting is to learn and practice good shooting habits. In this case, good shooting habits means more than gun safety, sight picture, and trigger squeeze. It means doing things that will prolong your life in a gunfight and avoiding doing things that will expose you to the danger of being killed.

Shooting under any sort of pressure is difficult. Some of you who attend matches have seen the mistakes people make when under pressure of a stopwatch. Some forget to knock off the safety. Some forget to load their guns. Some stand up to reload or to clear a jam when they should stay down under cover. The best precaution against that sort of thing happening to you is to practice the correct actions until they become habits.

PREPARING YOURSELF FOR COMBAT

There are not many experienced gunfighters around. Gunfighting is a very deadly business and few survive enough gunfights to become real experts at it. If you make a mistake in a gunfight, you do not get the luxury of doing it over and over until you get it right. You must be quick and accurate or you will be dead.

How, then, do you get to be competent at gunfighting if there are few experts around to teach you and you are not likely to live long enough to learn from experience? The way

to do it is to practice the methods that will enable you to win a gunfight until they become second nature, that is, habits.

Practice is important. In a shootout, you don't have time to think it out or to make mistakes. You must know the basic moves and be able to make them without hesitation or fumbling.

The basic moves include, but are not limited to: drawing your weapon, firing accurately under pressure, reloading, clearing jams, taking cover, and using pre-planned strategies. If you hesitate during a shootout, your career will be very short and you will be able to measure your life expectancy with a stopwatch.

For example, taking cover when fired at is instinctive. Nevertheless it must be practiced. Imagine what would happen if someone fires at you and the only cover close enough is a gutter full of water or mud. If you hesitate while trying to decide if getting your clothes dirty is better or worse than getting shot, you may get shot. If you have a cup of coffee in your hand and you take time to put it back neatly on the table without spilling a drop before going for your weapon, the blood spilling will be yours.

After you have learned the basic building blocks of tactics you can practice combining them in some of the scenarios outlined later in this book. You will learn from experience, without risking getting killed, what works for you and what doesn't. You'll learn to make snap judgments under pressure. You'll learn the capabilities and limitations of your weapons, your own skill, and your partner's,

THE CONDITIONED REFLEX

Many people, when they hear the term "conditioned reflex", think of Pavlov's dogs salivating at the ring of a bell or of a notorious Communist brainwashing technique. Actually the conditioned reflex is a familiar and ordinary thing that we use many times a day. Many actions that we say we perform "subconsciously" are those we perform by conditioned reflex.

There are two types of reflexes; inborn and conditioned. If your hand touches a hot object you pull it back without even thinking. You put out an arm to catch yourself if you fall. You jump at a loud noise, the startle reflex. All of these are inborn reflexes.

The conditioned reflexes are learned actions that are automatic. We do them without thinking, like walking or driving a car.

Reflexes can work either for us or against us. In shooting, flinching is the result of the startle reflex. We jerk the trigger and tighten up in anticipation of the loud noise and the recoil. We can cope with this by wearing ear protection to lessen the noise and we can practice pulling the trigger smoothly. We learn to "extinguish" the startle reflex.

Reflexes can also help us in our shooting. We learn to unsnap the holster and draw automatically. We reload without a lot of thinking, automatically.

Careful training of your conditioned reflexes will help you be more effective in a shootout. Building up the proper conditioned reflexes so that the time you waste will be minimal will speed up your reactions in combat. The more of the proper conditioned reflexes you can build up the more you will free your mind to make the decisions that cannot be made in advance.

It helps to standardize your moves and to practice them often. If you carry your pistol in a holster with a strap, always keep it either snapped or unsnapped to reduce hesitation or fumbling when you draw. If you carry a shotgun with the breech empty, the magazine full, and the slide back, always carry it that way.

You're better off practicing something and learning it well than you are abiding by a procedure that is labelled "correct" but not practicing it enough to make it automatic. For example, if you are a policeman and your department requires you to have the holster snapped at all times, then practice drawing from this condition, even though you can draw faster from an open holster. The difference in speed between the two isn't all that much; far less than the difference between one who practices and one who doesn't. Don't

try to cheat and practice from an unsnapped holster when you're out shooting on your own time. You'll build up a conditioned reflex, drawing from an open holster, that will impede you if you ever have to draw on duty. If you ever have to shoot for real, you'll lose several seconds and may even drop the gun.

It is easier and faster to learn something completely new than it is to unlearn something old first and then learn something new. Your conditioned reflexes will get crossed up for a while as you learn. That is why you must be consistent as you practice. You cannot do one thing in practice and another when the real thing comes along. One conspicuous example is picking up your brass. If you reload you are naturally concerned with saving your empties and reusing them. You may even have built up the habit of taking your eyes off the targets after each shot to see where your shell has gone, if you are using an automatic pistol. You may pick up after each shot. If you have a revolver, you may have built up the habit of emptying the shells into your cupped hand and placing them in your pocket before reloading. In combat, the time lost doing this can cost you a lot.

It is very worthwhile to dissect every move you make in practice and to ask yourself if this would be the best thing to do in combat. If the answer is no, then change your procedure and practice it.

In this connection it is wise to avoid some things which will only degrade your combat skills. The PPC is one of them. As practiced in this country today, it is shot with guns, holsters and ammunition that are suitable only for competition. The guns are delicate, specially reworked jobs that a real cop would never carry on the street. The holsters are low-slung, cumbersome affairs that would impede you if you had to sit down in a patrol car with one strapped on. The ammunition is so low-powered that in one match the bullets did not go through the targets but stayed stuck in the cardboard.

Another trap to beware of is that offered by most police qualification courses. You are on the seven yard line and you have to fire six shots in seven seconds into the target. This gets you into the habit of emptying your gun into one target,

something which leaves you ill-prepared to face multiple opponents. Once you empty your gun, you have nothing in reserve until you have reloaded and this awkward pause can be exploited by an opponent.

Dry firing as such is less important in combat shooting than it is in other forms of shooting. However, practicing drawing your pistol and bringing it up to fire is very important. You can save a lot of ammunition in practicing dry. This is particularly important in practicing firing at targets at medium to long ranges, where you depend less on kinesthetic sense to direct your fire than you do on a rough sight picture, looking over the top of the barrel. If you practice drawing and bringing your pistol up slightly muzzle high, you will be surprised at the amount of improvement you can make in a short time. A refinement of this technique, if you have a double-action revolver, is to begin pressure on the trigger as soon as the gun clears the holster. You keep the hammer coming back as you raise the gun and by the time you have it in your line of sight only a slight additional pressure is needed to drop the hammer on the primer. This saves you a fraction of a second of time but that is all you need to win in a gunfight. If you practice until this becomes a conditioned reflex you will have gained a significant advantage.

Dry firing can help you in another way. It should be obvious that in a shootout you should keep your eyes on your opponent. If you are not proficient, however, you may have to look at your holster to see if it is snapped, your gun to see if the safety is off, etc. You should practice until you do not have to take your eyes off your opponent at all.

Never forget that the habits you develop in practice will stay with you in combat. If you are serious about developing your combat skills think of this often. It is a point so obvious and so fundamental that it is often overlooked or ignored. The conditioned reflexes that you build up in time of peace are those with which you will go to war.

EMOTIONAL STAMINA

—In New York City several years ago a policeman who was issueing a traffic ticket to a minority group member was

accused of being a racist by the driver and the other passengers in the car.

—In Tempe, Arizona, several years ago, a policeman found himself looking down the barrel of a gun held by a person who was holding a baby in the other arm.

—Anywhere, USA, anytime. A policeman coming onto a stickup finds that the stickup artist is female. He orders her to drop the gun and she smiles at him and answers: "You wouldn't shoot a woman, would you?"

—Anywhere, USA, anytime. A policeman frisking a suspect reaches down to feel if the suspect has a weapon near his crotch and hears the suspect say: "Gettin' your jollies, man? You like that, don't you?"

These incidents have one common factor: an attempt by a "street-wise" suspect to emotionally embarrass or blackmail a police officer. Emotional blackmail occurs a lot in our society and it occurs in everyday life. Most of the time it is just a matter of someone jockeying for a position of unfair advantage but when it occurs in what might be a life and death situation it is far more serious.

This has been going on for years, almost under the surface of our lives, but it is rarely discussed or even faced squarely by policemen until it actually happens to them. There are many minor examples:

—A robbery team, male and female, keeps the firearms concealed on the woman's person, on the theory that a policeman is less likely to search a woman if they are stopped for a field interrogation.

—A felon with a charming manner and a baby-face disarms his victims with a smile before robbing or killing them. He is rarely suspected because of his innocent appearance. This is getting a bit old, as we have had many baby-face killers in our history.

—A ruthless teen-ager takes advantage of the effect that his youth has upon people and embarks upon a career of robbery or murder.

—In a riot, women with small children are often found in the front ranks of the demonstrators.

The criminal is at a disadvantage against the police. If he

is a street criminal he knows that he cannot in most cases win a fistfight or a shootout against an armed and trained police officer. In any event, even if he does, the police have the organization to track him down in most cases. Therefore he tries to outthink the policeman he faces. He will, if he is "street-wise", take advantage of every bit of psychological leverage he has. He succeeds all too often.

The policeman, or for that matter the ordinary citizen, can best defend himself against these strategems by being aware of them and by thinking out in advance his reactions to them. It is all too easy, for example, for a householder to hesitate or vaccilate when he finds that the intruder he has just confronted looks like Mickey Rooney instead of Jack Palance or George Raft.

The police officer must understand that there are people out there trying to take advantage of his natural compassion and exploit it to the fullest. While it is a common thing to wish to give a "break" to a youthful offender who has made only one mistake, this can be abused.

Similarly, in a situation involving deadly force, it is quite possible to mis-evaluate a suspect on the basis of his superficial behavior or appearance. This can result in failure to search a suspect thoroughly, for example, with the result that when you least expect it he will pull out a concealed weapon. This is doubly dangerous if the suspect is a woman. You will not always have a policewoman handy to do the search. Just remember that any accusation is better than risking getting killed.

ASSESSING YOUR COMBAT SKILL

Your choice of tactics will depend in part on how proficient you are with a weapon. Some of us, naturally, are much more adept than others. They can prevail in situations in which they would be considered "outgunned" by conventional standards. A good example of this is the incident at Zurich airport in 1969. Four Arab guerrillas opened fire on an El Al airliner with submachineguns. An Israeli security guard dropped out of the plane through a belly hatch onto a taxi-

way and proceeded to shoot it out with them. He was armed with only a small caliber pistol. Nevertheless he killed one of the attackers, wounded another, and caused the others to flee into the arms of the police. This man was outgunned but not outmatched. He showed not only raw physical courage but a certain coolness and skill under fire.

None of us can be sure of how we will react under fire, of course, until it happens. However, we can safely assume that we will react in the way we have learned and practiced. There are ways of assessing our skills in order to give us guidelines as to what we realistically can expect to do in a shootout. For example, we can test our ability to draw and hit a silhouette target without aiming. If we do this at different ranges and keep a record of our scores, we will have a good idea of where and when we can hit an opponent "from the hip", when we should take a rough sight over the barrel, and when we should switch to deliberate, aimed two-handed fire.

It is important to also shoot after running a hundred yards, for then we get some sort of simulation of the physiological effects of fear and the stress of combat.

Shown here are some printed forms we've used in recording the results of our firing trials. You may want to copy the blank one for your own use.

Included in this chapter are some printed forms we've used in recording the results of our firing trials. You may want to copy the blank one on the opposite page for your own use.

The results shown on the following pages are composites of the scores of several shooters. The shooters are somewhat better than average shots but not champion shooters. The scores are not perfect scores nor are they "par" in any way. Please note that the scores shown were all done in broad daylight and without any extra hazard, such as an opponent who shoots back. The pistol tests were done as rapid fire, except for the hundred yard trials.

The figures will give you a rough idea of what can be done under the conditions enumerated. They are the best we can do to give you an idea of what can be done with a gun in a way to which you can relate. It does no good to tell you

Name: _____ Date: _____

Gun: _____ Ammo: _____

Situation: _____

_____

_____

Distance	Shots Fired	Hits	% of Hits	Cum. Time	Avg. Time	Comments

(Permission granted to reproduce for personal use)

that a certain champion shot can put five shots into the area of a playing card from the hip at fifteen feet, nor does it help to see another champion put his shots into a target while firing on the run. We are not all that gifted. The only consolation we have is that any opponent we may face is probably not gifted either.

A precautionary word about statistics is important at this stage. Statistics are only numbers and must be interpreted intelligently to draw the proper conclusions. In this case, the figures are valid only for this group of shooters in daylight. You can be certain that the figures would be much lower at dusk or at night. Also, these figures are averaged out. In reality there were certain irregularities which can be ascribed to "luck" and are unpredictable. Therefore it is useless to show them. What this means in practical terms is that you might shoot from the hip and knock out an opponent one hundred feet away while his every aimed shot missed you, or vice versa. Don't count on it, though. These figures show the relative probabilities — what will happen most of the time. It is best to go by that rather than put your trust in the exceptional case that might show up once in a lifetime.

As you can see from Composite "A", shooting from the hip can be very effective close up. There is a very rapid falloff in effectiveness as the range opens up. At thirty feet these shooters hit less than one-third of the time and at forty it was nearly hopeless. In practical terms this means that the time required to get that one in ten hit would have been better spent in bringing the gun up and aiming.

Name: COMPOSITE A Date:

Gun: S+W M-39 Ammo: BALL

Situation: DRAW AND FIRE EACH SHOT FROM HIP

SILHOUETTE TARGET DAYLIGHT

Distance	Shots Fired	Hits	% of Hits	Cum. Time	Avg. Time	Comments
10 FT	10	10	100			
20 "	10	6	60			
30 "	10	3	30			
40 "	10	1	10			

Composite "B" shows that aimed fire was fully effective out to thirty feet and then dropped off slightly as the range opened up. It is clear from a comparison between this chart and the previous one that you are better off in aiming, even if you use only one hand, at the longer ranges.

Name: COMPOSITE - B Date: _____

Gun: S+W M-39 Ammo: BALL

Situation: DRAW + FIRE AIMED ONE-HANDED

SILHOUETTE DAYLIGHT

Distance	Shots Fired	Hits	% of Hits	Cum. Time	Avg. Time	Comments
10 FT	10	10	100			
20 "	10	10	100			
30 "	10	10	100			
40 "	10	9	90			
50 "	10	8	80			

Composite "C" shows that using the two-handed hold will steady the aim and get 100 per cent hits out to sixty feet in this case. Remember that although you may not get the same results in your tests of your shooting the basic trend will apply. As the range opens up you have to aim more carefully. At short distances, say ten feet and under, aiming is a waste of time if you are in a hurry and fighting for your life.

Name: COMPOSITE C Date:

Gun: S+W M-39 Ammo: BALL

Situation: TWO-HANDED AIMED — DAYLIGHT SILHOUETTE

Distance	Shots Fired	Hits	% of Hits	Cum. Time	Avg. Time	Comments
30 FT	10	10	100			
40 "	10	10	100			
50 "	10	10	100			
60 "	10	10	100			
70 "	10	9	90			

Hitting a silhouette target at 100 yards with a pistol is not so easy, as you can see from Composite "D". It can be done but it requires careful aiming and some support for the pistol. Compare this chart with the results at shorter ranges and you will see that the pistol is really a short range weapon, even though there are cases on record of exceptional shooters getting hits at unreasonably long distances.

Name: COMPOSITE D Date: _____

Gun: RUGER BLACKHAWK Ammo: _____

Situation: SILHOUETTE AT 100 YARDS - AIMED SLOW FIRE DAYLIGHT

Distance	Shots Fired	Hits	% of Hits	Cum. Time	Avg. Time	Comments
	10	3	30			FIRED OFF HAND
	10	2	20			SITTING POSITION
	10	5	50			FIRED FROM A REST

Composite "E" shows us what we should already know: that it is easier to hit with a rifle at long ranges than with a pistol and that an optical sight is very helpful. Here we at least have it quantified. We get a rough guide that it is quite possible to hit a man-sized target out to 300 yards with a rifle without either having a sniper's rifle or being a champion shot. That does not mean that there is no hope of getting hits beyond that but as a practical matter a man at 300 yards looks to be about the width of the front sight on a rifle with iron sights. A telescopic sight makes it possible to get hits beyond 300 yards with relative ease. The actual limit depends on many variables besides the skill of the shooter — the rifle itself, the caliber of the cartridge, wind, whether the target is still or moving, etc. In practice, with specially built and tuned rifles, snipers have gotten hits out beyond 1,000 yards in combat. How far beyond depends on whom you choose to believe. How this relates to you is that the longer ranged rifles are heavier, more delicate and usually slower-firing. Some of them have bipods and some are even single-shot.

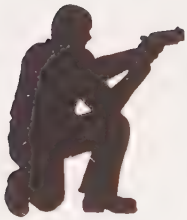
Name: COMPOSITE E Date: _____

Gun: SEE BELOW Ammo: _____

Situation: SILHOUETTES AT 100 AND 300 YARDS

DAYLIGHT. SUPPORTED POSITION

Distance	Shots Fired	Hits	% of Hits	Cum. Time	Avg. Time	Comments
100 YDS	10	10	100			MINI – 14 IRON SIGHTS
300 YDS	10	6	60			MINI – 14 " "
100 YDS	10	10	100			SCOPED .243
300 YDS	10	10	100			SCOPED .243



11. Sizing Up Your Opponent

It should be obvious that the outcome of a gunfight depends very heavily upon who the combatants are, their psychological makeup and their skill with weapons. This is every bit as important as the hardware involved. Adding to this is the fact that your attitude and tactics will be heavily influenced by who your opponent is and what sort of a person you think he is. The reverse holds true, too.

If, for example, an intruder in your home turns out to be a youngster who is not holding a weapon, you are more likely to tell him to "freeze" than to shoot him without warning. On the other hand, if you are a member of a sheriff's posse searching for a fleeing murderer, you're more likely to shoot first and ask questions later.

As your course of action will depend upon the evaluation you make of your opponent, you should try to consider the following points if time permits. Still, your assessment will most likely be based upon incomplete information.

1) Age. You are more likely to give a youngster a break. However, before you get too generous, remember that some of the most awful crimes have been committed by vicious baby-faced youngsters. Be careful!

2) Sex. Traditionally, women are the weaker, gentler sex. As any policeman knows, there are a number of vicious female criminals. One half of the team of Bonnie and Clyde was female.

3) Ethnic background. This has been a touchy subject among police for at least a couple of decades. Street cops know that many of the suspects with whom they come into contact are ethnic types. However, to say this aloud invites

an accusation of racism. The fact is, however, that if you are a policeman responding to a gas station holdup call, you're more likely to stop an ethnic type than a well-dressed caucasian who looks like a bank president, if only for the reason that bank presidents don't stick up gas stations. A more likely reason, often overlooked, is that stick-up artists don't usually wear suits.

The really delicate part of this subject is that more policemen are drawn from the ethnic minorities today. Many of them have been assigned to undercover work. Some operate as plainclothesmen. There has been at least one unfortunate incident in which a black plainclothesman was shot by a uniformed officer because the uniformed man did not know that there was a black plainclothesman on the scene. During the affray, the uniformed officer came face to face with a black man holding a pistol. In reality, the black plainclothesman was chasing a suspect. The uniformed man fired first and asked questions later.

In small police departments, where everyone knows everyone else, this is not likely to happen. In larger ones it is a constant danger. Some departments cope with this problem by giving their plainclothesmen passwords. As far as your personal response to this problem, you will recall from the chapter on cover that one advantage of cover is that it gives you more time to think and to evaluate the situation. If you are behind cover when you confront a suspect you have time to challenge him and avoid a tragic mistake.

4) Proficiency with weapons. You may know this by the subject's reputation, or you may have to make your own on the spot evaluation. You might get a clue from the way he holds the gun and if his hands are shaking.

5) Mental attitude. Is the subject desperate, killcrazy, etc? This will give you a good lead to follow in handling the situation.

An important sidelight on this is the problem of the hyped-up opponent. The proliferation of use of psychoactive drugs in the past couple of decades has led to a myth arising that the doped-up adversary has the strength of ten men, has

superior speed and coordination, and is generally a more dangerous opponent. This is mostly untrue. Drugs degrade performance. The drugged opponent is likely to exercise poor judgment, be somewhat uncoordinated, have vision problems in severe cases, and be overconfident. The only way in which he is more dangerous in the drugged state than he would be normally is that he is likely to be more reckless.

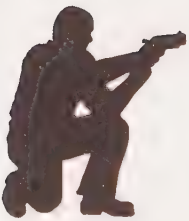
The drugged opponent also allegedly takes a lot more to stop him than a normal person. It is true that drugs tend to cancel out reaction to pain and shock. At the same time, to do this, the dosage must be heavy. This leads to the same handicaps of uncoordinated action, poor judgment, etc., that degrade his combat performance.

6) Criminal record, if any. This information may or may not be at hand. You should be aware of your own attitude, however. Are you more likely to shoot first and ask questions later if you know the suspect to be a hardened criminal? Most of us would, whether we like to admit it or not, and regardless of any concept of equality under the law, or departmental policy.

7) Expressed intention, if any. ("This is a stick-up. Get out of my way or I'll kill you." etc.)

8) The presence of a weapon in the subject's hands. Last but not least, this is usually the critical factor and determines whether the situation will be resolved with or without gunfire. It also has a strong bearing on the legality of shooting your opponent, if it comes to that. Always watch your opponent's hands.

In many cases you will not have the time to evaluate the situation in detail. In practice, always follow the maxim: "When in doubt, shoot it out."



12. Stopping Power

This is the subject of a lot of controversy among shooters. Unfortunately, most of the arguments regarding stopping power are backed up by dogmatism rather than logic and careful thought.

To understand what "stopping power" is all about, we must first look at what produces a gunshot wound. Most people understand that a projectile passing through the human body produces a hole, technically known as the "permanent cavity". What is not so well understood is that if the projectile is moving at high speed it also produces a shock effect and an actual displacement of tissue known as the "temporary cavity", which collapses after the missile has gone. The displaced tissue is definitely damaged but this is not always obvious.

The speed of the missile is important. A knife wound will not make a temporary cavity. The damage is all done by cutting tissue. A bullet will make a temporary cavity because of its speed. Tests by the U.S. Army show that the size of the temporary cavity is proportional to the kinetic energy of the bullet, which is proportional to its speed. In simple language, a small fast bullet will produce a larger temporary cavity than a large slow one.

To fully understand what this means we have to look at tissue destruction and tissue disruption. Tissue destruction results from the permanent cavity. A plug of tissue is pushed out ahead of the bullet, or is pulped by it passing through. Tissue disruption is less obvious, and less understood, even by some medical men. Sometimes it is referred to as "shock" which further confuses the subject. Tissue disruption, caused by the temporary cavity, causes a loss of function of the

tissue involved. This can go by different names, such as paralysis, mortification, and shock, but the result is the same. The tissue or organ stops working, either temporarily or permanently.

Another important factor in determining the seriousness of a wound is whether the bullet strikes soft tissue or bone. If it strikes bone the impact can break off pieces of bone which go off in different directions, each making its own wound channel. These pieces of bone are known as secondary missiles. The production of secondary missiles depends more on the momentum of the bullet (mass times speed) rather than kinetic energy.

Yet another factor in assessing the seriousness of the wound is the number of missiles that penetrate the body. Multiple hits are effective out of proportion to their number. Their destructive power is proportional to the square of their number. A quick look at a simple example will give an idea of how this works. A charge of No. 00 Buckshot, nine pellets traveling at over 1000 fps, measuring one third of an inch in diameter each, and hitting at point-blank range with over 200 foot-pounds of kinetic energy each, makes nine different wounds, each one as serious as that made by a .38 bullet. When you look at it that way, it is easy to see why a shotgun is considered to be so deadly and it is obvious how multiple wounds work.

Pistols, because of the low speed of their bullets, are generally less effective at producing wounds than other firearms. Shotguns fire a much heavier charge at velocities somewhat higher than pistols. They produce very serious wounds. Rifles fire bullets that may be lighter or heavier than pistol bullets, depending on the caliber, but they do so at speeds that are two, three, and even four times that of pistol bullets. Since the kinetic energy varies with the square of the speed, rifle bullets produce wounds that are serious indeed. In some cases the speed of the bullet is so high that it disintegrates within the body, causing massive destruction of tissue.

Closely tied in with this is the construction of the bullet. Today many bullets are designed to expand. This enhances the effect in the body. As we have already seen, the .22 bullet

fired from a "Stinger" cartridge will expand to over twice its original diameter. A certain 9 mm. bullet will regularly expand to about .63 caliber.

Most of these bullets have to be travelling at about one thousand feet per second or better to expand properly. 1000 fps seems to be the threshold of expansion, and this causes problems in using expanding bullets with certain pistols which do not develop this speed. Of course, practically every rifle fires its bullet at 1000 fps or better and in fact sometimes this causes serious problems at the other end of the scale. The bullet breaks up on impact and does not penetrate enough to cause optimum wounding. One sidelight on this is that a bullet which hits bone is much more likely to expand or break up than one which hits soft tissue.

Finally we have to consider the vulnerability of the human body to gunfire. It is obvious that a hit in the brain will do more to put your opponent down than a hit in the arm.

Certain organs are more vulnerable than others. Unfortunately you can't aim at a specific organ in a gunfight. Your best strategy is to aim at the heaviest concentration of vulnerability and depend on the normal spread of your shots to do the damage. The best aiming point, following this principle, seems to be the upper part of the torso, just below the throat.

The accompanying sketches show the most vulnerable points on the body. Their injury or destruction is immediately life-threatening.

The sketches, however, are imprecise because the human body is imprecise. Everyone is built differently and the size and location of any organ will vary slightly from one person to another. Moreover, some organs are not tied down and will wander according to body position. The lungs vary in size depending on how inflated they are at a particular moment.

The sketches are frontal views. The position of an organ changes with the view. From the front the spine is seen at the midline of the body. In profile, it will be at the extreme right or left.

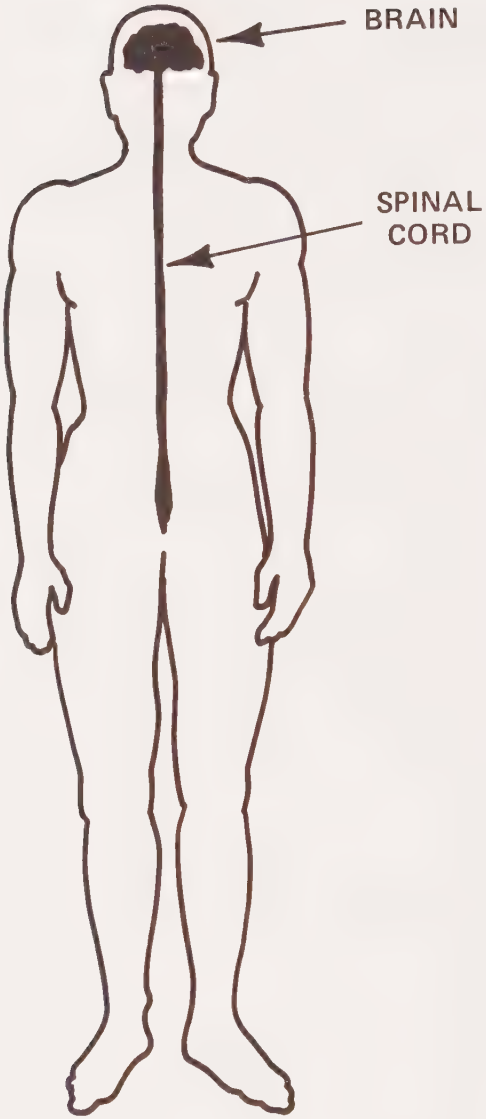


Figure 1
Brain and Spinal Cord

A hit in the brain will cause immediate unconsciousness and rapid death. It is rare to survive a gunshot wound in the brain.

A hit in the spinal column will cause paralysis of the body from that point down. A hit in the neck region of the spine will kill.

The spinal cord is well protected. Besides the spinal column (vertebrae) acting as an armored casing, to reach the spinal cord from the front the bullet has to travel through the thickness of the torso, losing a lot of energy on the way.

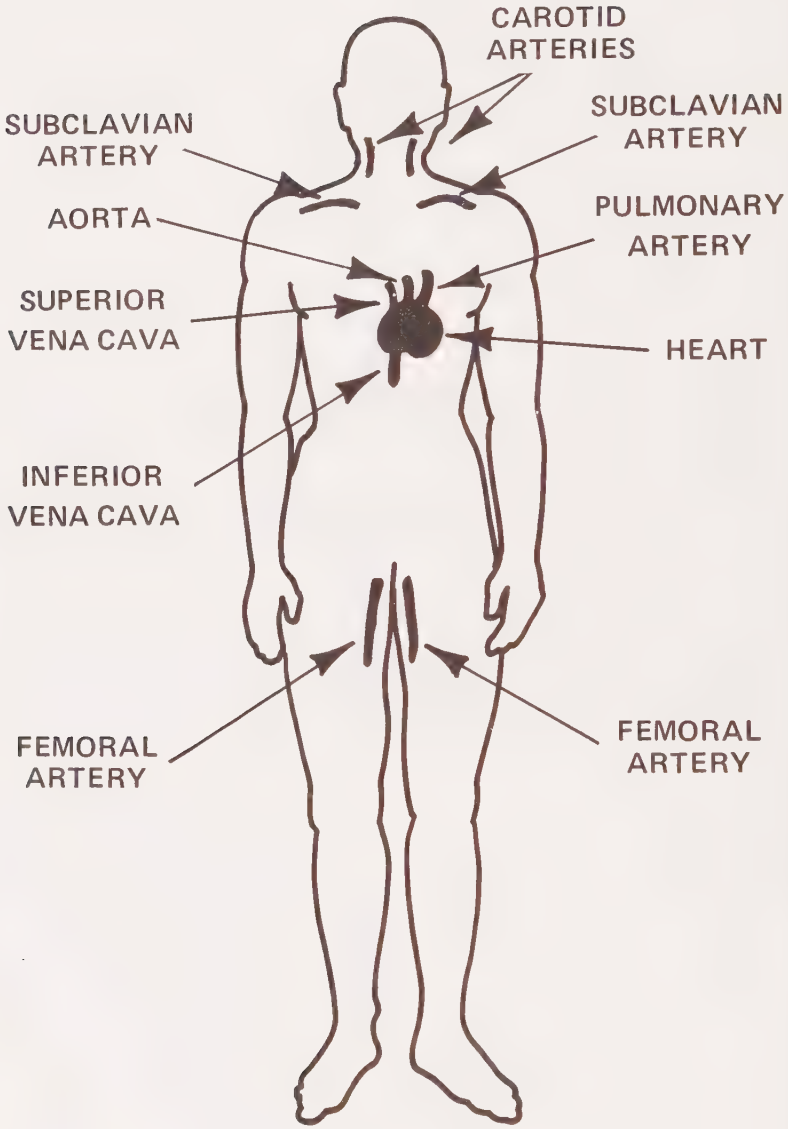


Figure 2
Circulatory System

The heart is the body's big pump and is well protected within the rib cage. A hit in the heart causes unconsciousness within a few seconds and death within four minutes. You don't have to hit the heart to put your opponent down, as the heart is surrounded by major blood vessels which are very vulnerable to gunfire. The aorta and the vena cava are the major blood vessels of the heart and a hit on either one is fatal.

The subclavian arteries are major arteries right under the collar bone. A hit is fatal, as it is impossible to put a tourniquet on a blood vessel buried within the body.

The carotid arteries, on both sides of the neck, are very vulnerable to a bullet wound or even a knife slash. Near each carotid is the jugular vein, which carries the blood back from the brain. A hit on these blood vessels is immediate and profound. The blood supply to the brain stops and unconsciousness follows within seconds. Death follows within four minutes.

The femoral arteries, on the insides of the thighs, supply the legs with blood. They are in soft tissue and are very vulnerable. A hit causes a fatal hemorrhage. The incapacitating effect is not as great as a hit on another part of the circulatory system. A tourniquet can be put on and direct pressure on the wound will stop the bleeding but this is hard to do in the middle of a gunfight.

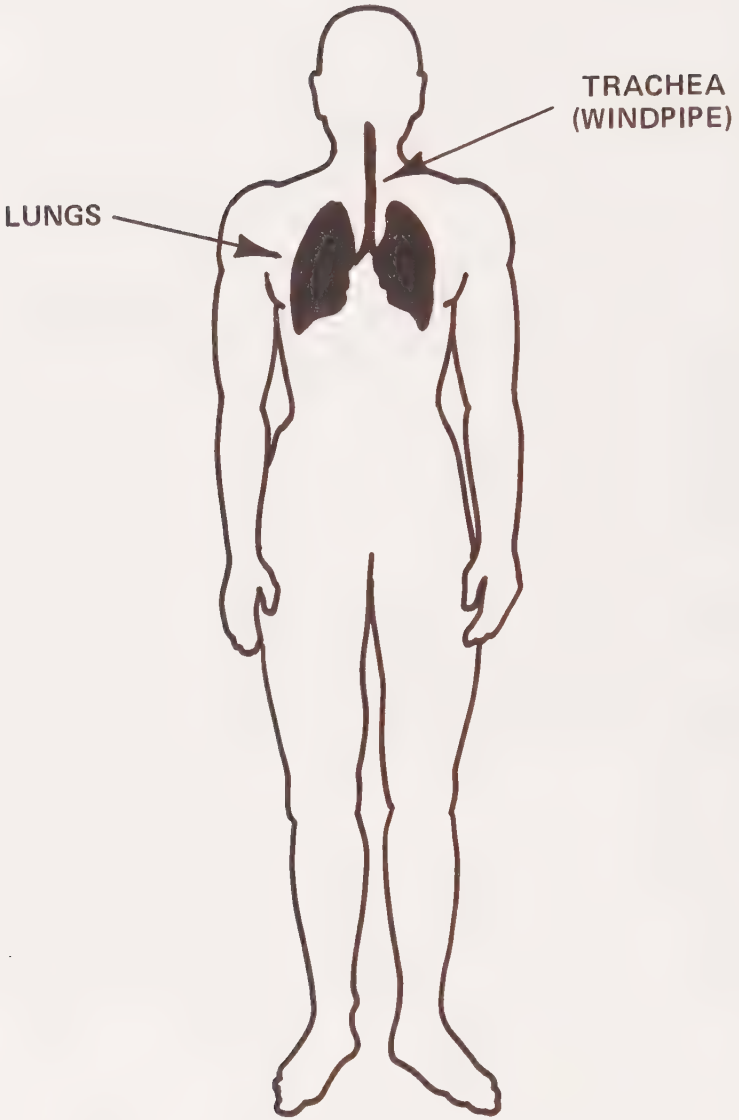


Figure 3
Respiratory System

The trachea, or windpipe, is the most vulnerable part of the respiratory system but the results of a hit can be disappointing, as a puncture will not stop the victim from getting air. However, a hit in the neck may not involve only the windpipe, particularly if the weapon is a shotgun.

The lungs, like the heart, are protected by the rib cage but a bullet will shoot through, probably causing secondary missiles as it smashes through the ribs. The punctures in the chest will admit air and cause collapse of the lungs. With the lungs collapsed respiration is impeded and death by asphyxiation follows soon.

The lungs are well supplied with blood vessels and projectiles tearing up lung tissue will also tear up many large and small blood vessels. Death can ensue from hemorrhage or the lungs can fill up with blood, blocking the air and causing asphyxiation.

Apart from structural damage to vital organs the body can be disabled from pain and shock. Pain is not always a major factor as the impact has a numbing action on the nerves. It has happened that people have been shot without a subjective sensation of pain but rather a feeling of having been struck with a hammer.

Shock is a complicated subject. Psychological shock can be as disabling as physical shock. Some people react to great peril by total inhibition of any action, "paralyzed with fright," as the expression goes.

Neural shock causes local paralysis. The effect is familiar to anyone who has ever hit his "funny-bone".

Finally there is physiological shock, a killer. Basically it overloads the body's defenses. A severe hemorrhage that results in lowered blood pressure, shallow respiration, and an irregular heartbeat means shock and this process usually hastens death. The victim usually becomes unconscious shortly.

The more systems injured the more quickly shock will follow and the more serious the effect. Sometimes, however, a slight wound combined with extreme fright can cause a combatant to faint. People have been known to faint from a tooth extraction or a cut finger.

There is a phenomenon known as "the dead man's five seconds". A person who is shot, unless immediately knocked unconscious by a hit in the brain, does not die instantly and is not necessarily immediately incapacitated. There is usually a lapse of time between the hit and unconsciousness and death. Even a fatal wound leaves the combatant a few seconds in which he can continue resistance. The most seriously wounded opponent might be able to pull himself together for one final shot at you. When you hit, therefore, keep shooting and above all don't break cover too soon. Overconfidence can cost you your life.

NUMBERS GAMES

Many attempts have been made to quantify the "stopping power" of firearms, usually with data based on obsolete

criteria derived from tests run many decades ago. The most notorious of these is the "Hatcher Formula" derived from the Thompson-LaGarde experiments done back in the first decade of this century.

None of the various efforts made so far seems to be satisfactory, as each year brings forth a new expert with a new formula or a new modification of an old one. None of these numbers games works well because they all deal with an abstraction rather than real events. They all ignore three important points:

a) The actual velocity of the bullet. The figures given for any cartridge usually bear little relation to reality because the tests are run in a special jig with a long barrel. When fired from an actual firearm, the speeds attained are a lot lower. For example, the factory ballistics given for the .357 Magnum has it going at about 1500 fps. However, out of a real revolver with a short barrel, the real speed is more likely to be about 1100 or 1200 fps.

b) The site of the hit. Obviously a bullet in the brain will stop a combatant a lot faster than one in the arm.

c) The factor of individual resistance. Some people have gone down for good after being shot with relatively light caliber weapons: others have withstood hits from weapons that are normally considered sure man-stoppers. One man, cited in *Street Survival*, took almost three dozen hits with 9mm bullets before going down. Another, cited in Fairbairn and Sykes' book, *Shooting To Live*, absorbed six .45 caliber bullets and still kept fighting. Even the 12 gauge shotgun, which should be a guaranteed stopper, has failed to put an opponent down at times.

Stopping power "formulas", whatever their derivation, are worse than useless because they do not take all factors into account and may mislead the shooter into a false sense of confidence if his weapon scores well according to the particular formula he is using. He may neglect marksmanship, forgetting that the most fabulous man-stopper is useless unless you can hit with it.

SPECIAL AMMUNITION

In 1975 the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration published a study of computerized stopping power tests, using practically all of the then available types and brands of ammunition. The most deadly bullet for its weight, according to this study, was the Glaser Safety Slug, a bullet containing small shot inside a frangible jacket. However, no evaluation was undertaken of the bullet's effectiveness against someone wearing heavy winter clothing. It was noted that it would not penetrate even the lightest bullet-proof vest.

The high-speed hollow point rounds scored better than most other types in this study. Unfortunately, no attempt was made to take into account the fact that most weapons involved in shootouts hold more than one round and that multiple hits have an effect out of proportion to their number.

PART III.
STRATEGY AND TACTICS

13. The Basic Strategy Of Shooting For Real

The basic principles for a gunfight are: planning, speed, and surprise. Speed and surprise are almost self-explanatory. They are important elements in any conflict. If you practice them, they give you a great advantage over a slower witted opponent.

Planning is more difficult. It is impossible to foresee the circumstances of your next gunfight, most of the time. Yet you must have some idea of what you are going to do. You cannot depend on "instinct" to save you. We are not born expert shooters or expert tacticians.

In a shootout, the most important thing is to do SOMETHING. Positive action will cause the situation to develop in your favor. Passiveness or indecision will allow your opponent to exploit the situation in his favor.

Always do something, but what? There will be no time to think it out and to reflect on the various possibilities open to you. You must act reflexively. You must have a small library of pre-planned, "canned" responses to various types of threats. While it is impossible to foresee all of the contingencies a few basic plans will get you through most situations and provide the basis for improvisation where required.

Your plans will be based on a few basics which I call "building blocks". These can be arranged to suit the situation. You'll be following two basic strategic aims, self-protection and counter-attack.

Self-protection means taking cover, if available, dodging, using body armor if you have it, or deflecting your opponent's weapon (gun, club, or knife) if you are within reach.

Counter-attack means shooting back and maneuvering to a position where you can get a better shot.

It would be an over-simplification to think of self-protection as passive and counter-attack as active. They do overlap.

There is a school of thought that says that the best defense is a good offense. This is an excellent slogan. It sounds nice. It reads good on paper. It even rhymes. It can get you killed. If you are facing three armed opponents it is suicidal to stand there, draw, and try to shoot down the three of them from the standing position without even trying to make a smaller target of yourself. You can go into a deep crouch. You can dive for the dirt. If you just stand there you might get one or two of them if you're fast but you will not survive to attend their funerals.

Usually, self-protection and counter-attack go hand in hand. You can get behind cover, where available, and use it to support your shooting hand as well as protect you from enemy fire. Getting into a supported, sitting, or prone position provides you with a more stable gun platform. Your body is better supported and you shoot better. The two strategic aims complement each other.

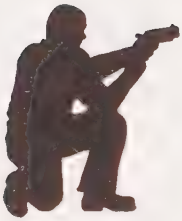
LANCHESTER'S LAW

This is a basic building block of many of the tactics that follow. Lanchester's Law states that the fighting power of a group is proportional to the square of their number. Most people grasp this intuitively.

In practical terms this means that you should try to avoid being outnumbered, as that puts you at a disadvantage far worse than the raw odds would lead you to believe. Conversely, you should always try to outnumber your opponent, as that improves the odds in your favor greatly. Having one partner actually quadruples your fighting power, all other things being equal.

The reason Lanchester's Law works is that there is more to a shootout than just guns, calibers, and numbers. You have to consider such factors as reloading time, crossfire, using fire to cover movement, morale, etc. That is why having a partner enhances the fighting power of one side out of proportion to the raw numerical ratio.

You should use imaginative tactics to try to reduce the odds against you if you see that you are going to be outnumbered. Pre-empting the enemy, attacking first, helps. This can be done by ambushing one or more of them, reducing the odds before the main action starts. You might have the element of surprise and you will keep it a few precious seconds longer if you can dispose of your target silently, as with a blackjack or a knife. When the action starts, try to keep one of your opponents between you and the rest of them to obstruct their line of fire. On the other hand, if you are working with a partner you must keep spread out to avoid blocking each other's line of fire.



14. Basic Gunfighting Tactics

In a shootout, proficiency with a firearm is not quite as important as sound tactics. With poor tactics you can throw away whatever advantage you have in marksmanship over your opponent.

Use cover and concealment.

Take the initiative and don't relinquish. If possible get in the first shot. This may bring you into conflict with the law but at least you'll be alive to stand trial. Would you rather be tried by twelve or carried by six?

Don't procrastinate. Wasting time can cost you the initiative and your life. Think, and use caution, but don't stall. Act on your decision at once, for what would have been a good move a few seconds ago may be a bad one now.

Be accurate. A cliché about gunfighting is: "Take your time, fast." What this means in less elliptical language is that you should try to make every shot count. A slight delay while you make sure that you're on target is better than a miss. If you miss you spot your opponent a shot. A fraction of a second to steady your aim is time well spent. If you miss it takes time to recover and fire another round or burst. During that time he can blow you into orbit.

Try to avoid being caught with an empty gun. Keep track of your shots if you can. If you have an automatic change magazines before you run dry. That way you'll have one in the chamber if you are taken by surprise while slipping in a fresh magazine.

Keep alert to your opponent's need to reload, if the fight lasts that long. When he's fired his last shot you can use the pause to change your position or to rush him. If he has an automatic and you can see him watch for the slide to go back

and stay open. If he has a revolver wait for the sixth shot or for him to go click-click. Be aware, if counting his shots, that some revolvers of the "Chief" or "Bulldog" type hold only five rounds and that some revolvers of the High Standard "Sentinel" type hold nine.

Use the light to your advantage and your opponent's disadvantage. Pick a position where he, not you, is silhouetted or skylighted. If you can find cover in a position where dazzling light is in your adversary's eyes, so much the better.

Plan a line of advance (or retreat, if it becomes necessary) using the available cover as much as possible. When advancing or retreating do it in a series of bounds, from one covered position to the next. If the distance is short do it in a straight sprint to give your opponent the least time to react. If the distance is longer then zig-zag to throw off his aim. Covering fire from a partner may be useful in such a situation.

Keep in mind that if you hit your opponent he might not be totally incapacitated even if he drops, or he might be faking it to lure you out from behind your cover. In a life and death situation you should shoot him a couple more times while he's down, just to be sure. This seems unsportsmanlike but he'd probably do the same to you.

When you finally think it's all over, don't be in a hurry to break cover, and never come out with an empty gun. You may get a nasty surprise.

If there are several of you, don't bunch up. Spread out in a skirmish line to force your opponent to divide his attention and to enable you to catch him in a crossfire.

Similarly, don't let yourself be canalized. Be careful in alleys and corridors if you all crowd in there. You all make good targets (he can't miss) and the ricochets are an extra hazard. In addition, only one or two of you can be effective in a corridor.

15. Civilian Versus Military Firefights

If you have had military service your experience will be of very limited usefulness in armed confrontations in civilian life. There is a great difference between the way the military do things and the way they are done in civilian life, even if you are a member of an armed, paramilitary force such as the police.

The differences are:

1. You will not be able to call upon heavy weapon support and will not be able to use them yourself. In the army, when you detect a sniper, you can call a tank or a flamethrower team to suppress him. You have mortars and other artillery on call if you need them. No more.

2. You will often be acting alone. Whether you are a police officer, a shopkeeper reacting to a stickup, or a homeowner trying to cope with an intruder, you will not have a squad, platoon or company of troops backing you up. There are few occasions in which even the police work together in more than pairs.

3. There are many restrictions on the use of gunfire. You cannot shoot anyone because he looks suspicious. You cannot even shoot a criminal on sight in most circumstances. You must work within a doctrine of "reasonable force" and the penalties for its transgression are severe. If you are a civilian the restrictions are even worse. Even firing a gun within city limits without good cause is at least a misdemeanor.

4. No "reconnaissance by fire" is permitted. You cannot fire into bushes, shadows, buildings, rooms, closets, etc. to "clear" them of possible adversaries.

5. In war, civilians take their chances. They stay out of the way or else! If civilians come sightseeing and gawking, and they catch some crossfire in the process, that's too bad, and nobody will blame you for it if it is truly unintentional (atrocities are something else). In civilian life you have to contend with gawkers and sightseers anywhere you go, and you must make a serious effort to safeguard them if there is any shooting. For example, you must evacuate the area when there is going to be a protracted affair with a barricaded suspect. Civilians can also serve as witnesses, not always to your liking.

6. Casualties are not acceptable. Life is cheap in the military, and soldiers are considered to be expendable. In civilian life, policemen are not. Neither are innocent bystanders, hostages, or, in some circumstances, are criminals. You cannot shoot a jaywalker or a shoplifter. You can shoot an enemy soldier who merely waves at you.

16. Selecting The Weapon For The Job

Picking the right weapon for the situation is a luxury that you might not have. If you are a policeman or a member of the armed forces you use what your superiors tell you to, whether it's the best for the job or not. Sometimes you will have some latitude if you are lucky. If you are a civilian, at least you have the choice, although you will be restricted somewhat in the sense that some weapons are not available to you. That is not as much of a limitation as it may seem, as you would have little use for a rocket launcher or a flame-thrower in most situations.

The pistol is the most obvious choice — we will deal with that one first. Its most important quality is small size and concealability, compared to shotguns and rifles. It is significantly less powerful than either of the others. The controversy about "stopping power" rages around the pistol calibers, while shotguns and rifles are generally accepted as being powerful enough to stop assailants.

Within the category of the pistol there are some differences that can be significant in some circumstances. Most of the time, if you are carrying a pistol as part of a uniform, you can choose the make and model that best fits your hand, consistent with your organization's regulations. If you are going to carry it concealed you have to worry about bulk. In this regard the automatics are usually flatter than revolvers, making less of a bulge. If you are going to carry the gun in a pocket or in a holster, target sights are a liability, as they are likely to snag. Target sights are not all that useful in situations in which you are going to need a small concealed weapon.

One point to be noted is the notoriety of the Colt Government Model .45 pistol. This has been hailed by people

who should know better as the greatest defensive handgun of all time. If you are misled by this, it could cost you your life.

The Colt Government Model was designed by John Browning in the first decade of this century. In the Nineteen-Twenties, he designed an improved version, in the more efficient 9mm caliber, which is sold today as the Browning Hi-Power, or the P-35. In view of this, to claim that the Government Model is the best pistol going is like saying that the DC-3 is the best thing in airliners.

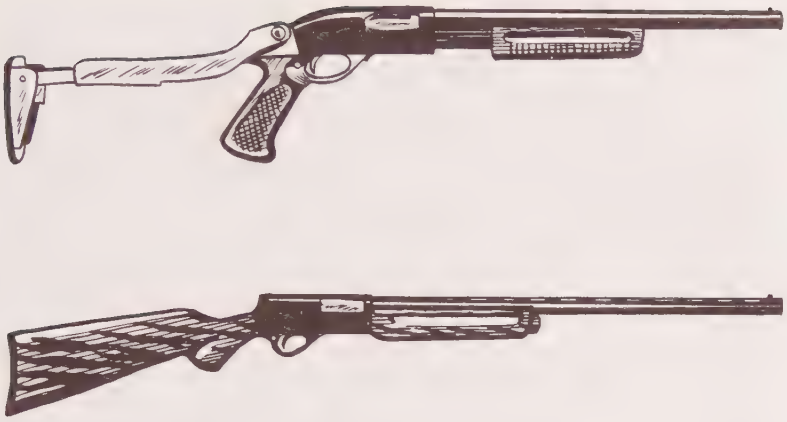
It is pointed out, quite correctly, that the Government .45 is used widely in matches, and that most of the winners are equipped with it. What is overlooked is that the pistols used by the champions have been extensively and expensively reworked. They have had accuracy jobs and several modifications to make them work more reliably than they did when they came out of the box.

Another fact that is ignored is that this pistol is an unusually difficult one to shoot. Ask the veterans of WWII, who had to use this pistol in combat, and you will find out that most of them had a very hard time with it. An expert can, with a properly tuned .45, almost drive nails at 25 yards. However, a gun that can be shot well only by a small group of virtuoso shots is of little value to the average guy.

In tests of various types of pistols, the armed forces found that the Browning P-35 and the Smith & Wesson Model 10 performed well in the hands of novice shooters. Which pistol will be the best for you is something that you will have to find out for yourself.

A quick test you can perform, if you are in a store trying to decide between several pistols, is to take the pistol in your hand and look at something a few feet away. Close your eyes and lift the pistol and try to point it at your chosen target. Open your eyes and see how close you came. Try this with several different ones and you will find that some point better than others, in your hand. Someone else may have different results, because everyone's anatomy is different.

The shotgun is a favorite weapon for urban use. With a load of shot, it is more powerful than any pistol (at this point



The police type shotgun with folding stock is popular with police departments and the Secret Service. However, unless compactness is important to you, the sporter shown will do the job too.

someone will write to me to inform me that the .44 Super-Machismo Wildcat develops X more foot-pounds than the 12-gauge. Be that as it may.), yet has a conveniently short range so as not to be an excessive hazard for use in a built-up area. Police like the shotgun for this reason.

A wide variety of loads are available for the shotgun, as previously covered. This means that in terms of firepower and range, the shotgun is more versatile than the rifle or the pistol.

The main disadvantage of the shotgun is that it's not concealable unless you saw off the barrel. This is usually a worthless procedure. If you need a pistol, get a pistol. If you need a shotgun, get a shotgun.

The tactical situations in which the shotgun can be used are numerous. Except where concealability is important, the shotgun can be used to advantage. Whether the situation is a stake-out or a home defense one, you will feel a lot better facing an adversary with your hands wrapped around a shotgun.

For some extreme situations the shotgun loaded with rifled slugs will give you added penetration. This can be important if shooting at a barricaded opponent or a car. If you use slugs, though, you must be aware of what is beyond your target if you miss.

The rifle has basically one use — engaging targets at long range. In this respect it is superior to the pistol and the shotgun. Of course, it is not very concealable. Few police agencies make widespread use of the rifle or carbine, as it is not very suitable for use in a built-up area because of its extreme range. Still, it has its place and in the hands of an expert it can be used to clear a sniper in an urban environment.

There are three technical points that must be understood in order to plan the correct tactical use of the rifle. The first is point-blank range, the range up to which the drop of the bullet is so little that you do not have to change the sight setting. For most rifles the point-blank range is at least a hundred yards. A shotgun or a pistol runs out of steam at much less than that, as a rule.

The second point is closely allied to the concept of point-blank range, and is called the rule of three. It is applicable to rifles with a muzzle velocity of between 2500 and 3200 feet per second. Stated simply, if you set your sights to shoot three inches high at one hundred yards your point of impact will be within three inches of your point of aim out to three hundred yards. It will vary with the caliber, weight of bullet, design of bullet, and muzzle velocity, but this is a good approximation. The shortest range at which you will be within three inches of point of aim works out to two hundred and thirty yards for the 220 grain .30-06. The longest range is three hundred and twenty-five yards for the .243 with the 90 grain bullet. The .308 with the standard 150 grain bullet will give you impact within three inches of your point of aim out to two hundred and seventy-five yards. The .223 has a lower ballistic coefficient so the range will be about two hundred and fifty yards.

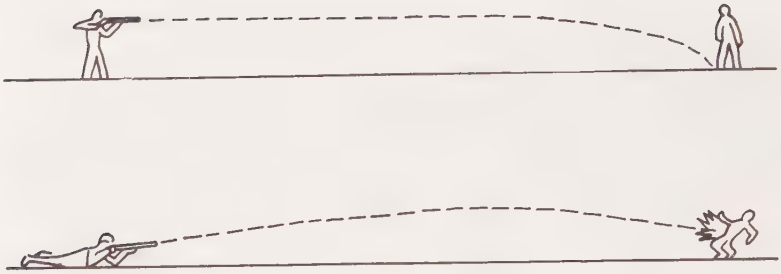
The third point is the beaten zone, or lethal zone. This means the range up to which the trajectory of the bullet will

One good choice in a rifle is the Ruger Mini-14 with a thirty round magazine. A lot of police agencies have selected this weapon, which is outstanding when you consider quality and cost-effectiveness together. The difference in price between it and other light, semi-auto carbines in .223 is enough to buy a lot of ammunition.

be within about six feet of the ground. Anyone standing up within that range would be in danger of being hit. The tactical use of this is that you have an idea of the maximum range at which with a hasty shot at the mid-point of the body you have a chance of hitting a full-grown man standing up.

With the .223 the beaten zone extends out to four hundred yards. With the .308 it is about the same, assuming that both are sighted in for two hundred yards.

The beaten zone will vary with the sight setting, of course, but what is not so widely recognized is that it will vary with the firing position too. If you fire from the standing position the bullet will go up a little at first, then start falling until it hits the ground. If, on the other hand, you fire from the prone position, the bullet will be climbing for a long way even though it will not go any more above your line of sight



than when firing from the standing position. The accompanying illustrations will make this clear.

The submachine gun is the subject of almost as much misinformation as the pistol. This is because many gun writers simply do not know how it is used and may have never fired one in their lives. They just repeat what others write, namely that you can't hit anything with a submachine gun and that its main value is psychological.

To begin, whether or not you can hit anything with the submachine gun depends on both the gun and whether or not you know how to use it. Many submachine guns have a selective fire switch, permitting you to fire single or multiple shots. Many of them fire from an open bolt, which jars the gun when you pull the trigger, limiting your single-shot accuracy. Still, you should be able to hit a man at fifty yards, single shot.

Full auto fire is for when you are faced with a number of assailants close up. Even so, full auto fire does not mean that you should empty the magazine with one pull of the trigger. If you do, you will find that the recoil has thrown you off target, and that most of your shots have gone into the air.

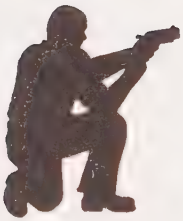
The proper way to fire a submachine gun is to learn trigger control, to fire in bursts of three to five shots, bring the gun back on target, and fire again. Many people have trouble doing this, and this is why the latest designs have a selector switch that has a position that permits you to fire in bursts of three.

The "psychological" advantage of a submachine gun can be very real. If you are alone and confronted with several attackers, a burst from a submachine gun can be a very effective deterrent, calming their ardor and giving them second thoughts about rushing you. With a pistol, you might be overwhelmed by weight of numbers.

A special case in selecting a weapon is the double-action automatic pistol. It is not as recent a development as many believe, as the Walther PP came out in 1929 in Germany. The double-action automatic is a successful attempt to combine the fast first shot feature of the police revolver with the large magazine capacity and speed of reloading of the automatic pistol. It is designed so that it may be carried with the hammer down, as a revolver can, with little or no danger of accidental discharge.

The double-action auto has been criticized extensively by various gun writers. Some say the double-action feature is useless and others say that it is difficult to learn to fire a gun that requires a long, heavy trigger pull for the first shot and a light one for the rest. Mention is also made that the double-action is not often seen winning at pistol matches. All of these criticisms show that the proper use of the double-action auto is not well known.

The double-action feature is for close, fast use. It enables you to get off a quick shot by just pulling the trigger, without fooling around with a safety. This can be important when your life depends on it. For longer shots, it is quite easy to cock the pistol as you draw it, and take that shot single-action. The technique of aimed, fast double action shooting is also possible, as it is for many revolver experts, but it takes longer to learn. It is also possible to shoot the first shot double and the rest single-action, but the change-over causes some people difficulty and in any event is not necessary.



17. Body Armor

The use of lightweight body armor has proliferated in recent years, particularly among police on patrol. It used to be that "bullet-proof vests" were bulky and heavy affairs, weighing up to forty or fifty pounds and they were used only on special occasions when a shootout was expected. Today's light ballistic cloth armor can be worn under street clothes and is not too heavy or too hot except in the hottest climates.

There are many makes and models of ballistic cloth vests and they vary in weight, comfort, and effectiveness. The typical vest weighs between three and four pounds and protects against bullets up to .38 caliber. There are upgrade models available, of course, but they are heavier, less comfortable, and they cost more. Some will even protect against rifle bullets, but they use steel or plastic plates to do so, and are not practical for everyday use.

The main effort in developing body armor in the twentieth century has been to develop something that would be worn. A "bullet-proof vest" that weighs forty pounds is not likely to be worn except by those who expect momentarily to be fired at, such as members of anti-sniper teams. Even with today's advanced technology, the vests designed to give you protection against .30 caliber rifle bullets are too heavy to wear constantly during an eight-hour shift. A police officer issued one of these would probably leave it in his locker when he went out on patrol.

That leaves you with the question of which one to procure for your own use, if you feel that you need one. One approach is to decide upon the level of protection that you will need. For this you need to know what your opponent will use against you. There are vests that are no heavier than

five pounds that will stop a .357 Magnum. However, some clown might blast away at you with a .44 or a shotgun firing slugs.

A better approach is to find one that you will wear constantly, not leave behind. Even marginal protection that you take with you is better than full protection that you leave behind. If you are near a store that sells them, go try some on for size. You might try to buy one by mail. One reputable manufacturer is:

Second Chance Body Armor
Box 578,
Central Lake, Michigan, 49622

This is not to endorse one make as being superior to another. There are several good and reputable manufacturers of body armor in this country. However, Second Chance will send a sample of the ballistic cloth along with the sales literature. You can then run your own tests to judge what its resistance to penetration is. Be prepared for a shock. Some 9 mm bullets will go through it like a hot knife through butter. Also, it is not an effective defense against a knife, because a knife moves more slowly than a bullet and will cut rather than slam through. The speed of impact is the important factor here, much like slipping your hand into a basin of water instead of slapping it down hard. If you slap it down hard, the water feels like concrete and it will resist penetration.

When wearing body armor, remember that it is not absolute protection and don't get too cocky. Use cover and use caution.

One often heard objection to the use of body armor is that its use can lead to blunt trauma. This fascinating medical term means the injury caused by being hit with a heavy, blunt object, such as a club or a hammer, as contrasted with the penetrating injuries caused by bullets and the slashing or penetrating wounds resulting from a knife.

While blunt trauma can be serious, involving a broken rib and internal bleeding from ruptured organs, it is obvious that

it is better to get a fractured rib from the impact of a bullet stopped by armor than to get a fractured rib, a pierced lung, and maybe even a fractured spine from the penetration of the bullet. Body armor is not absolute protection. It will, however, protect against some calibers and reduce the seriousness of the injury even if the bullet penetrates, as it will absorb some of the velocity and energy of the bullet.

Some criminals and terrorists are now using body armor. The reputable manufacturers of armor sell only to police and others who can demonstrate a legitimate need, but criminals manage to get it anyway, much as they manage to get guns despite gun control laws. Therefore you must be prepared to deal with an armored opponent. The only good thing about this situation is that the armor that he wears has the same shortcomings as the armor available to police. You must be prepared to take advantage of these weaknesses and to use your imagination.

There are two possibilities; that you expect your adversary to be armored and that you don't. You might, for example, be a member of a stake-out team waiting for a robbery gang that is known to use body armor. On the other hand, you might have just gotten a couple of solid body hits on an opponent who refuses to go down.

If you expect your adversary to be armored:

1) Use cover for yourself. This makes you more than equal. A brick wall is better protection than a vest.

2) Select a weapon heavy enough to pierce the armor. A .30 caliber rifle or a shotgun firing slugs will penetrate almost all body armor made.

3) Use your imagination and select a weapon that will not be defeated or deterred at all by armor, no matter how heavy. A gasoline bomb is a good example and one that is available to anyone. If you are a policeman your department will not allow this but in certain circumstances a civilian can use one, if he does not have to worry about the fire hazard.

4) Use metal-piercing ammunition. There are some commercial makes available. Also, if your weapon takes a military caliber, there is a lot of surplus armor-piercing

ammunition on sale cheap. For example, in 9mm you can get Yugoslav surplus (headstamp 7 50 four dots and a six-pointed star) which will do the job well.

In this connection, it doesn't take much to defeat the lighter vests. It is not generally known but a .22 Stinger or one of that class will do it, if fired from a rifle. The longer barrel enables the bullet to get up to maximum speed.

If you are taken by surprise your best bet is to aim at the unprotected areas, which are many. A head shot will put your opponent down. The legs are not usually armored. Shooting out a kneecap will put your opponent down, though not necessarily out. A hit on the inside of the thigh, where the large femoral artery is located, will usually cause a fatal hemorrhage.

18. Shooting Stance

In a shootout style itself is not important: only hits count. There is no "correct" shooting stance or position. What is correct is what works then and there. You might be standing up or crouched in expectation of enemy fire. You might be behind cover. You might be shooting full face or around a corner (we assume you're still breathing) and your hands might be shaking. If so, you'll need both hands just to hold the gun.

One hand or two? That is a very controversial point and you will find some very opinionated people advocating one or the other. To a "combat" match shooter anything but two hands is crude and inept. That is the style.

On the street a lot depends on the circumstances. It is not a matter of choice. You may not have two hands free. The other may be holding a baton, a flashlight, or a clipboard. If it's one of those new ballistic clipboards made out of Lexan, lucky you. Hold on to it.

You should be proficient at shooting a pistol with one hand. You might, in a street situation, find yourself holding off one attacker with one hand while drawing your pistol with the other. In a dark hallway your other hand might be on a bannister or a light switch. Suddenly two attackers come boiling out of a doorway, one of them with a knife. You may just barely be able to grab the wrist of the hand holding the knife while you try to get your back against the nearest wall while drawing your pistol with the other hand. The other attacker, in the meantime, will be swarming all over you and you feel his hot, steamy breath on your cheek as he grunts obscenities into your ear. At this critical point in the narrative you may survive if you can hold on to the hand with the

knife, knee your second attacker in the gonads, and draw your pistol, which will allow you to smoke the one with the knife. You must also be prepared to shoot the one you kneed if he comes up with any surprises.

This is not the clean, sterile atmosphere of a shooting match. You do not have time to spread your feet eighteen inches: you are lucky if you are still on your feet. You cannot wrap both hands around the grip, bend your elbows, and focus on the front sight.

If, on the other hand, the situation permits you to use both hands, you will find that the steadying effect of the second hand will reduce the trembling of the gun. You can expect your gun to shake because of exertion or fear. You will also find that the second hand will absorb some of the recoil, enabling you to bring the gun down faster for a quicker second shot. This is important if your target is at a longer range.

At very short ranges, touching distance, the fastest way to shoot is to fire one handed just as your gun clears the holster. There will be no time to bring the gun up, grasp it with both hands, and aim. In practice it is possible for most shooters to draw, fire and hit within half to one and a half seconds. If you are surprised the speed of your draw will be much slower. If you need to use both hands it will take closer to two seconds. Beyond ten feet you will still be able to get hits with one hand but you'll find that it helps to bring the gun up into your field of view and line it up with the center line of your body. At longer ranges you'll find it necessary to take a rough sight over the barrel. Beyond fifty feet you'll have to use the sights carefully but quickly.

With a lot of practice you can learn to bring the gun up slightly barrel high as you draw and to start squeezing the trigger as you raise the pistol, timing it so that the gun goes off as you bring it into line. This does take a great amount of practice and in fact you will not usually need such speed at greater ranges.

A wide-spread fallacy is that of group size. It is impressive to be able to draw and place two shots within the space covered by a playing card at fifteen feet, but it is of little

value in a gunfight. If anything, you want some spread to take advantage of the effect of multiple wounds. The worst thing that can happen, apart from a clean miss, is to place your second shot in the same hole on your opponent. You can't destroy the same tissue twice.

The prone position often is neglected. If you can, assume the prone position. You may have to overcome a great psychological deterrent if there is a pool of dirty water in the spot in which you want to lay. Nevertheless, if you can bring yourself to ruin a good uniform or suit and dive for the dirt, you will find that it makes a smaller target of you and it allows you to steady your aim.

Use a rest for your gun hand whenever possible. When shooting for your life take every advantage that you can and try to remember that under the excitement it is easy to miss even at close ranges.

Some authorities say that there is some value in firing as soon as your gun clears the holster even though you're not lined up on the target. Allegedly the shock value of the flash and the sound of the shot will stun your opponent and give you a moment more in which to get a hit. The other viewpoint is that there is nothing more stunning than a hit in the center of the body.

The subject of the crouch, as taught in many police academies and other shooting schools, is a very controversial one. Some say that everyone should shoot from a crouch. Bill Jordan, the noted gunfighting expert, says that the fastest draw is executed by keeping your body still and moving only your arm. Which is best for you?

To properly understand what the value of the crouch position is, and how it applies to gunfighting, we must look at its history, which started one morning before dawn in Shanghai in 1927. A police raiding party had to pass through an alley in the pre-dawn darkness in order to reach their objective. After the raid was successfully concluded the police and their prisoners had to pass through the same alley in the other direction, this time in full daylight. They were surprised to discover that there were wires strung in the alley at the level of their throats. An investigation showed that the

wires had been there for weeks, having been put there for the purpose of hanging washing. The policemen then realized that, in anticipation of coming under fire, they must have all been crouching without being aware of it. From that moment on the crouch position gradually became accepted in police circles. It was realized that people will instinctively crouch, to make a smaller target, when under fire or when they expect to come under fire.

The lesson to be drawn from this is that if you have to draw and fire quickly it is best to move only your gun arm, get your gun out, and shoot. If you already have your gun out and are expecting to be shot at you'll instinctively crouch down. That means that you should be able to fire from a crouch if you have to. The point that is often overlooked in all this is that a crouch is no substitute for cover. You should go for cover whenever possible.

19. Close Combat

In some situations it may be necessary to use your weapon as a club rather than a firearm. You may not want to kill your opponent but rather take him prisoner. You may have run out of ammunition or your gun may have jammed and there is no time to correct it. Finally, your adversary may be crowding you so much that you can't bring your gun in line to fire.

Clubbing your adversary because of the risk to innocent bystanders from gunfire is not a good reason. If you are close enough to club him you are close enough to press the muzzle against his body to guarantee a hit. The only risk to bystanders then is from bullets that totally penetrate his body and that risk is minimal. You may be able to turn him as you fire so that any bullets going through him go off in a safe direction.

Using the pistol as a club is easy. Just grip it as you normally would but take your finger out of the trigger guard. Bash at your opponent as hard as you can, concentrating on the head and face. Don't even think about the conventional police technique of using a blackjack so as not to leave marks. If you pistol-whip someone it will leave marks.

There is a serious error to avoid, however. Don't shift your grip on the pistol and grab it by the barrel. One supposed "expert", writing in a magazine, suggested that the best way to pistol-whip someone was to grip the gun by the barrel and use the top of the slide, cutting the opponent with the sharp edge of the rear sight. Apart from the fact that not all rear sights have sharp edges, it is painfully clear that if you want to cut your opponet you should do it with a knife, which is more effective for cutting than the rear sight of a pistol.

There are several wrong ways to use the pistol as a club. The worst is to grab it by the barrel and hit your opponent with the grip. That makes it too easy for him to grab it. Another bad way, suggested by one writer, is to hold it as shown above. The theory is that it will allow you to gash your opponent with the sharp edges of the rear sight. However, that still leaves the grip exposed for him to grab, although not as easily.

You're going to do some damage with the rear sight but in gripping the pistol by the barrel you're giving your opponent the opportunity to grab the gun by the butt, pull the trigger, and damage you.

The shotgun or carbine can be used to inflict disabling and even lethal injuries upon an opponent. It is normally held with both hands so it is possible to put a lot of power into a

swing. It can be used to deflect a blow from a knife or a club. It can be used to pin an opponent against a wall and choke him. It can be used in a rear strangle.

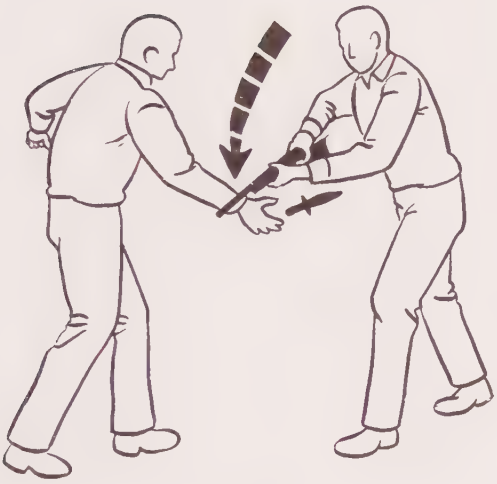
You can use it in the military butt-swing, which is a way to subdue one or more opponents in a smooth, rhythmic series of strokes. It originated in bayonet drill but it works well without a bayonet too. The first step is to jab the barrel into the adversary's stomach. Then bring the butt smartly up into his chin. Finally, you slam the butt into the back of his head on the downstroke.

With the proliferation of schools teaching judo, karate, and other forms of unarmed combat, there is an increasing

The best way to hold the gun to use as a club is to hold it as you would normally. You have a firm grip on the pistol, and if the situation demands, you can quickly slip your finger into the trigger guard and shoot.

The front strangle. Knee him in the groin while you are at it. Watch out that he doesn't do it to you!

possibility of encountering an adversary who will take the gun away from you with his bare hands and make you eat it, or worse. That is why it is important to keep your distance from an opponent. If you have to get close, you must put him down as fast as you can, before he can react.

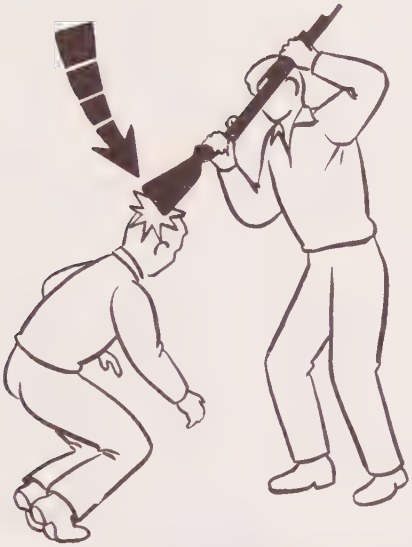


Blocking a knife. Follow up with a kick.

Blocking the overhead knife thrust. Use the barrel or forestock. It is important to catch him at the top of the stroke before he has built up momentum.

1. Using the military butt-swing against a knife. Step inside your opponent's reach and jab as hard as you can. Nervous reaction will make him start to double over.

2. As your opponent's head starts to go down, meet it with the butt of your weapon. A hard blow on the jaw will stun and hurt him.



3. Follow through and come back down. Unless you have a rubber butt-plate, you can fracture his skull with this blow. You finish up with your gun at the ready again.

20. Cover And Concealment

This is the subject most often ignored in the lore of "combat" shooting, even though it obviously is one of the most important determinants of whether or not you will come out of a gunfight still breathing.

Cover is placing yourself behind an object that is stout enough to protect you from enemy fire. Concealment means simply hiding behind something that will not stop the bullets but will keep your enemy from seeing you clearly. You should take cover whenever and wherever you can. If you can't find cover, try for concealment. You'll often have to settle for what's available.

There are several reasons for using cover. The first, protection from gunfire, is so obvious that it does not need any further discussion. Another reason is to give you time to think and to evaluate the situation without being under pressure to return fire instantly. In a street situation you might find that there are innocent people in or near your line of fire. Taking cover gives you and them a break in which they can get out of the way and you might be able to maneuver to another position from which you can shoot without endangering others.

Yet another reason for taking cover is to give yourself time to identify the people on the scene and to avoid what might be a tragic mistake. In a stickup situation, for example, at first sight you might not notice that the stickup man has a partner. Conversely, you might make a mistaken assumption. There are tragic stories of policemen seeing a man running down a street with a gun in his hand and shooting him. The man turns out to be the store proprietor chasing the holdup suspect but the officer made a snap judgment, fired first, and

This is concealment, not cover! You may be hidden from your adversary's sight, which is some protection in itself, but the bush is definitely not bulletproof.

shot the wrong man. Taking cover will somewhat reduce the urgency of the situation so that you can sort it out first before opening fire. It enables you to issue a challenge — "Freeze, — police officer!" in safety.

Concealment is a poor second choice but if often is enough. To hit you, he first has to be able to see you. If you are concealed behind a very large object, say a wood cabin, he may hit you by luck, but the odds are in your favor. Additionally, you have a psychological advantage in that the

suspect may not fire in the mistaken assumption that your concealment will stop the bullets. Your opponent watches TV too!

Some gunfighting experts say that your first priority is always to open fire and worry about cover later. Others say that you should always go for cover first, regardless of the circumstances. This can be very confusing, particularly when the exponents of one point of view tell you that if you fire and put down your adversary you won't need to go for cover. How do you decide what is best for you? After all, it's your life.

Clothing can help conceal you or it can betray your position. On the right you can see how dark clothing tends to blend in with the shrubbery. In most of these posed pictures, light clothing will be used for clarity.

The wrong way to use cover. This is excessive exposure. Granted that the rock makes a convenient rest for the arms, but the high profile shown makes a very visible target. It would be even worse if the rock were against the skyline. The rock is definitely bulletproof, but you are not!

The first step is to know the speed of your own reactions and your skill in relation to the situation. Then you decide what step is best for you. For example, if you have a suspect in a hallway and he is coming at you with a gun, you may not have time to run for cover before he shoots you. Then you must draw and fire as quickly as you can. On the other hand, if you are faced with several opponents, you know that you

cannot draw, fire, and get all of them before one of them gets you. Then you go for cover. In short, you take the step that will solve the problem fastest for you in that situation: the problem is, of course, keeping you alive.

Using cover properly is a much-neglected skill. Even in the military, where using cover is a basic subject, many troopers do not take advantage of available cover or misuse it, thereby swelling the casualty lists.

The right way to use cover. Looking and shooting around the side of this large rock helps you keep a low profile. You expose as little as possible of your body and your silhouette is somewhat masked by the shadow and the grass.

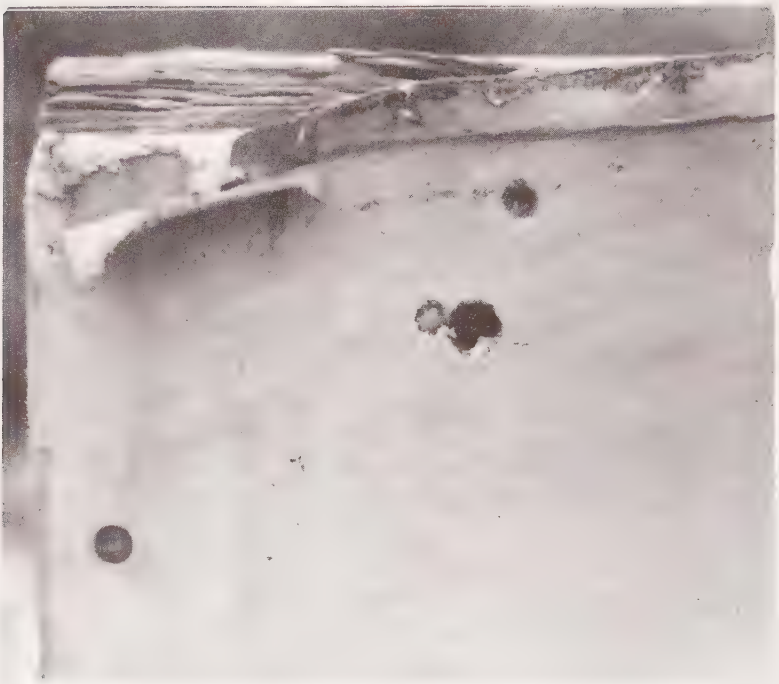
A wall can be excellent protection from your opponent's bullets if you use it right. On the left you see too much of the body exposed in an attempt to use the standard police "barricade" position, with the left hand gripping the edge of the wall and the thumb supporting the gun hand. At the usual gunfight ranges you should be able to hit your opponent without that extra hand supporting you. The adversary should see no more of you than is shown in the right-hand picture. Even that is excessive, as peering around the edge of the wall is more awkward than standing a couple of feet back of it and peering out from behind it. It makes ducking back a lot faster and you don't have to worry about your hand or your gun hitting the wall with the recoil.

Don't expose yourself by looking or shooting over the top of your cover. Shoot around the side. When you do expose yourself, expose as little of your body as possible, to minimize the target that you present to your adversary. Above all, do not stand up to reload or to clear a jam. The fight will not stop for your convenience.

There is a great deal of misunderstanding as to what constitutes cover. This is partly because we must first ask; "Cover from what?" There is a large variation in power in the category called hand weapons. A small caliber pocket pistol does not have much penetrating power. On the other hand, some of the Magnum calibers do. Slugs fired from shotguns do. Rifle bullets do. A lot depends on what your adversary is using.

The military have tables listing various construction materials and the thicknesses required to give protection against various types of weapons. For our purposes it is not necessary to have such a detailed list. We can divide weapons into two categories, low-powered and high-powered, calling them class 1 and 2. Most cover available will protect against one or the other or both. Class 1 includes pistols up to .38 caliber and shotguns firing birdshot only. Class 2 includes the Magnum calibers, all rifles, and shotguns firing buckshot or slugs. There are many ifs, ands, or buts to this system of classifying weapons, and many exceptions. For example, the .45ACP is in class 2 and yet has less penetrating power than the 9mm, which is in class 1. This is just a rule of thumb, however, and any attempt at greater precision would be defeated by the very wide variety of materials encountered in modern construction, and the wide differences in resistance to penetration found in building materials that are supposedly similar.

In buildings, interior walls will stop a BB gun and no more. They are typically wallboard and paint, and do not even stop a .22 caliber bullet. They will, however, stop light bird-shot if fired at a range of more than ten or fifteen feet. The 2x4s in interior walls will stop 9mm and .45 bullets passing through the 4" dimension, but as there is only one stud every sixteen inches this is scant protection. Interior



Interior walls are sometimes used for cover. This section of an interior wall was completely penetrated by a .22 and a .38 caliber bullet. However, these bullets failed to penetrate when fired into a stud in a later test. A 9mm also failed to penetrate a stud, but sailed through the wallboard with ease.

doors are made of lightweight wood, composition material, and even cardboard. They are worthless as cover.

Furniture varies widely in construction and it's impossible to generalize. You'll find that furniture will be more valuable as an obstruction than as cover. In the bathroom it's different. Some of the bathroom fixtures, such as the toilet and the bathtub, offer excellent protection against class 1 projectiles. The toilet is small, however.

Exterior walls usually offer much more solid protection against bullets. Wood exterior walls, particularly if covered with aluminum siding, will stop some class 1 bullets. Brick,

cement block, slump block, and cement walls will stop all class 1 and all class 2 bullets, except for the very heaviest Magnum rifle calibers. One problem for anyone taking cover behind cement or block walls is that even though a bullet may not penetrate the impact shatters the walls and sends a "scab", a chip of the far side flying off. This secondary missile can cause some damage.

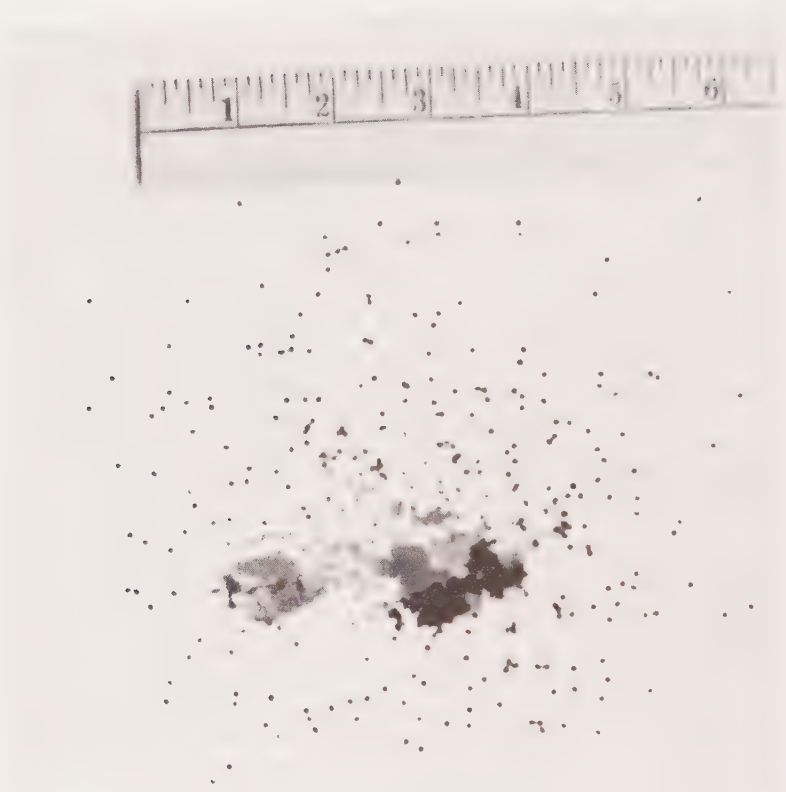
It is very important to distinguish between a real masonry wall and one that is just wood and chicken wire covered by stucco, which gives almost no protection.

Cars give little protection against bullets. Nevertheless, not all bullets will penetrate even the flimsy sheet metal of a car body. A lot depends upon the angle at which it hits. Even the glass will deflect some bullets, particularly the sloping glass of the windshield and the rear window.

The most solid part of the car is the engine. This will resist penetration by both class 1 and 2 bullets. The engine will be wrecked but it will keep bullets from going all the way through and getting you. Unfortunately, the engine is not very large and so the protection is limited. The other items in the engine compartment, such as the battery and the radiator, will stop most class 1 bullets and the sheet metal surrounding them will stop the rest.

Car doors are very poor protection. If you try to use one as a shield, in the style of the TV cops, you might get a nasty surprise if the gunman fires at you. Nevertheless, the limited resistance that a car door has can be enhanced somewhat if you can angle the door to the line of fire. There is no guarantee but some bullets will skid off rather than penetrate. In any event the door is not large enough to cover your whole body, even if it were armored. If you are in a situation where you can place some fiberglass or other type of armor inside your car door, just in case, by all means do it. It might save your life. If you are driving a police car, however, you probably have to take it as is.

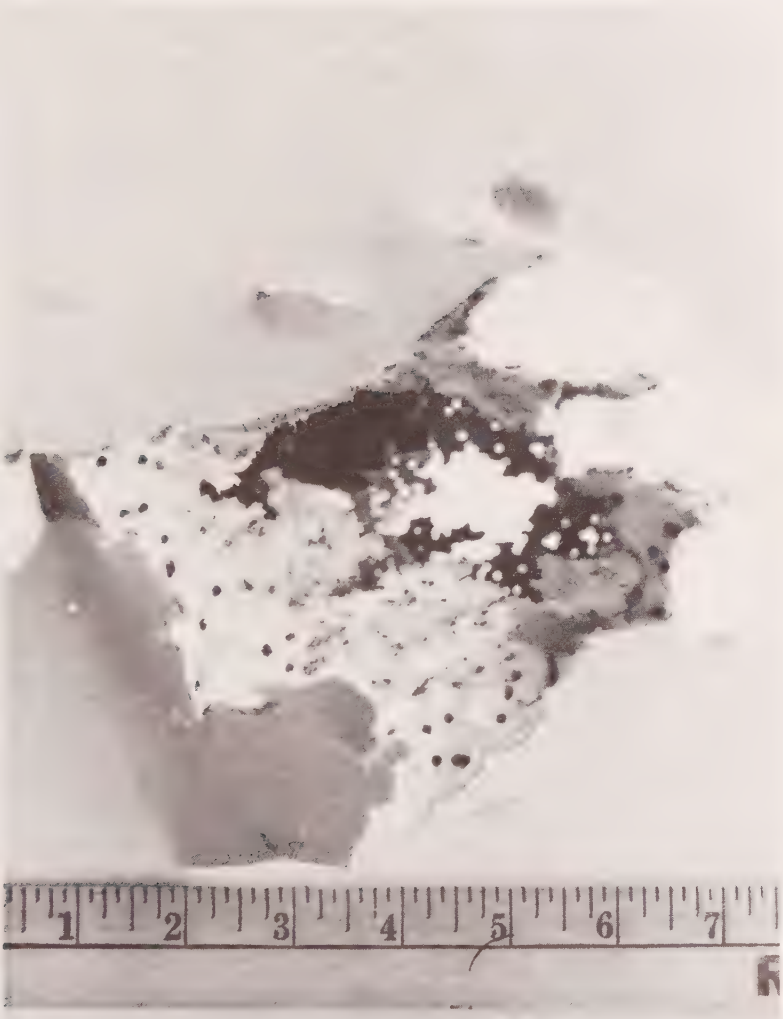
If you can use the whole body of the car for cover, the protection can be significant. If you have the car sideways in front of you, the bullet that reaches you will have to penetrate two doors, not one, and this will stop some of the lighter



Even light birdshot will penetrate an interior wall at short range. This shows a charge of No. 8 fired at ten feet. It went all the way through with enough force to do a lot of damage on the other side. At close ranges, anything fired from a shotgun is very dangerous to anyone standing in front.

loads. If the car is lengthwise you have the protection of the engine, all the sheet metal, at least two seat backs, and various partitions and whatever is in the trunk. This gives you class 2 protection, at least.

The big weakness in using a car for cover is that your feet are exposed. An opponent might try to shoot under the car to knock your feet out from under you, and then finish you off. This is why it is wise to try to stay behind a tire if you



This is the other side of the wall shown in the previous photo, illustrating how birdshot rips, tears and shreds. Anyone standing behind that wall for cover would have been severely injured, if not killed outright. Wallboard is slightly more bulletproof than cardboard.

can. It is not much protection but it will stop most class 1 bullets, if they hit the tread area. The sidewalls will stop a BB, guaranteed!

In the street there is a lot of cover available if you have the presence of mind to use it. Cars can be used as described above. Lamp posts, fire hydrants, mail boxes, and other common items offer varying degrees of protection. Walls are excellent as long as they are masonry, not wood or stucco.

Getting down in the street behind the curb will give you excellent protection. The parapet that the curb offers is only a few inches high and you might have to dirty a good suit or a clean uniform by diving into dirty water, but it could save your life. The curb will not cover all of you but it will cover enough to present your opponent with a very small target indeed.

Lamp posts, hydrants, and mailboxes give you protection from most class 1 projectiles. Masonry walls are good for class 2. Curbs will protect against almost anything, except for the small part of you that is exposed.

While being aware of the usefulness of cover for yourself, you should be prepared to take advantage of any errors that your enemy makes. He may not be very knowledgeable and may seek cover behind something inadequate. In that regard, you should know the penetrating power of your weapon. This information may be available from the manufacturer or, more likely, you can find out by running your own tests out in the boonies. You might run across an abandoned house or a derelict car.

If you have to face the possibility of your opponent taking cover it is good practice to carry a few rounds of very penetrating loads. Some metal piercing rounds are available commercially, or if you reload you might decide to load your own. In using these it is important to remember what is in back of your target. You do want to punch through a wall and get him but you must keep in mind the possibility of innocent people behind another wall behind him.

21. Movement Under Fire

From the discussion on the need for and use of cover you can see that protecting yourself from enemy fire is critical and you should have a clear understanding of how to do it. There are times, however, when you must break cover and change your position. You might want to find a better position from which to fire, you might be trying to escape, go for more ammunition, reach the radio in the car, etc.

There are several guidelines to follow if you have to move during a firefight. These are not all inflexible rules but they cover most contingencies:

1) Always plan ahead. Decide where you are going to go and how you will get there.

2) Once you break cover and start moving, never, never stop until you are once more under cover. The worst thing that you can do is to stop or hesitate out in the open in full view of the enemy. If you suddenly realize that you cannot get to where you want to go, it is better to run around in circles than to stop.

3) Timing is important. Make your break while your enemy is firing at someone else, if you can.

4) If you have a partner, he should give you some covering fire when you make your break.

5) If two or more of you have to break cover do you do it one at a time or all at once? The best thing to do is to all go at once. If you do it one at a time only the first one will surprise your adversary. The ones to follow will be almost sitting ducks as he will be waiting for them.

6) Unless you are adept at shooting while running (some people are) do not try to shoot while on the move. That will

slow you down. Your aim is to get under cover again as fast as possible.

7) If you have to approach a house or a structure of any sort remember that almost every position occupied by an enemy has one or more blind spots. Take advantage of these to approach your objective.

Some houses lack any window on one side. Others have bushes or other obstructions blocking the windows. Larger buildings usually have windows on all sides but if your enemy is only one or two people he cannot watch all sides at once. Take advantage of this and make your move accordingly.

8) Sometimes you can use smoke to screen your movements. The military have smoke generators and smoke grenades but you will most likely not, unless you have some surplus ones or you are a police officer whose department has bought some. Therefore you will have to improvise by starting a smoky fire upwind. This will probably be more trouble than it's worth but it's a good thing to keep in mind if ever you need it.

9) Darkness is, of course, an excellent screen. Just don't get overconfident. Remember that darkness makes you invisible, not bulletproof.

22. If You Are Outnumbered

When facing multiple opponents it is very helpful to have a partner, not only for tactical reasons but for the sake of your own morale. Nevertheless, you must be prepared to face the odds alone.

Generally, the first step is to take cover. That is the number one priority for you because you cannot hope to put all of your opponents down before they hit you unless you are under cover. This has been established beyond doubt in tactical experimentation.

The next step is to decide which of your opponents is the greatest threat and dispose of him first. For example, you may be faced with a man with a shotgun, one with a pistol, and one with a knife. The one with the shotgun is the greatest threat. Next comes the one with the pistol. Finally comes the one with the knife, unless, of course, he happens to be the one closest to you. There are variables which you must assess on the spot.

Much of your concern will be cover and maneuvering for a better position. You must also be aware that your adversaries will be trying to outflank you. If possible, try for a position in which your opponents are in a line and you are at one end of the line. That enables you to engage one enemy at a time and reduces the advantage of numbers for your enemy. This can be hard to do in open situations but inside a building there are many opportunities, such as doorways and corridors, alleys, aisles, etc. If you can canalize their attack so that they can come at you only one at a time you will not be at such a disadvantage.

There is a useful technique known as "trigger fanning" which helps to reduce the odds against you if you are facing

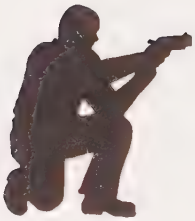
Trigger fanning will clear a room, an alley, or a corridor of multiple opponents very quickly. It works best at close quarters in a confined space where you can't easily miss and even if you do, the bullets will ricochet off a wall and continue into your opponents. It is the next best thing to a machine gun. Note the gun hand pressed tightly against the right hip and the index finger of the left hand tickling the trigger without touching the rest of the gun. A tight grip is important for correct pointing.

several opponents close up, without cover. It works best with an auto pistol which has a large magazine capacity. Brace your gun hand against your hip and wiggle the index finger of the other hand against the trigger so as to "fan" the trigger. A little practice will polish the technique for you. The shots will come rolling out as if you had a machine gun. This is also known as the "alley broom" technique. Actually, in an alley

or a corridor the effectiveness of the technique is enhanced by ricochets from the walls making up for the inherent lack of precision of trigger fanning. Out in the open, if your opponents are more than twenty feet away, you will just be wasting precious ammunition.

If you are facing two hostiles and nobody has yet made a move don't look directly at either one. Look between them and use your peripheral vision to detect movement. As soon as you see one move, draw and shoot him first. You have no time to evaluate the situation further. It is a critically dangerous situation because one of them may make a move to fake you out while his partner fires at you. If you already have them covered keep your gun pointed at one and shoot him first regardless at the first sign of trouble. The worst thing for you to do is to keep your gun muzzle and your attention oscillating back and forth between them.

If your opponents are well coordinated they might try to spread out to make it more difficult for you to watch them both. You should be aware of this tactic and prevent any movement. If you must, start the shooting yourself to keep control of the situation.



23. Moving Targets

You may have to fire at an opponent who is moving or at a stationary target while you are moving. It is not as easy as it seems. You will not easily be able to keep the sights on the target because you may be bouncing around and you may have to allow for lead. Calculating for lead can be done by rule of thumb or by formula. Usually, if you have to calculate, by the time you get done your target will be out of sight.

At short gunfighting ranges lead is insignificant. For example, if your opponent is walking at ninety degrees across your line of sight and you fire a bullet that goes at one thousand feet per second at him, if he is nineteen feet away he will have moved one inch while the bullet is in flight. This is assuming that he is walking at the usual rate of three miles per hour. If, on the other hand, he is running at twenty miles per hour and he is thirty-four feet from you, he will have moved one foot by the time the bullet reaches him. At one hundred feet he would have moved almost three feet by the time the bullet got to him. The lead required increases as the range opens up.

For targets moving straight toward you or directly away from you no lead is required.

Targets moving at forty-five degrees require about half the full load.

Don't even bother to try to compute the lead for targets closer than thirty feet. It will be less than your probable aiming error.

If in doubt aim just ahead of your target and fire rapidly, letting him run into the stream of bullets.

If you are using a shotgun the problem of lead will not usually arise unless you are using slugs. If you are using buck-

shot the pattern opens up as the range increases so all you have to do is to hold on the forward edge of your target. The lead will open up even further at ranges longer than a hundred yards but by then the subject is out of range anyway.

With a rifle the problem is much more difficult. You must first be able to judge the range accurately to be able to estimate the lead. Unless you are a specialist you will fail. The rules of thumb for a rifle firing a bullet at three thousand feet per second are:

For a walking man don't worry about lead up to about one hundred and twenty feet, when the lead will be about six inches. Your sighting error will probably be larger than this. For a running man, fifty feet is about the limit, if he is running at ninety degrees. For lesser angles the effective range is increased.

When shooting at a car don't try any silly stunts such as aiming at the tires. Aim for the engine room. Everything in there is vulnerable and if you have a rapidly moving target the bullets will strike further back, say in the driver's area. If, for example, you have a rifle as above, and the car is traveling at thirty miles per hour, and you aim above the front bumper, if the car is four hundred feet away you will hit the driver, who is about six feet behind the bumper.

If you have to shoot from a car the most important factor is whether you have to drive and shoot at the same time or whether you have a driver to steer the car while you fire. If you are alone you should be proficient in weak hand shooting and one handed driving.

If you are shooting at a stationary target, say someone on the sidewalk who may be shooting back at you, there are two ways to handle this. One is to stop the car in order to shoot from a stable platform. The second way is to get as close as possible to minimize the problem of lead. Lead exists whether you are the one moving or the target is. It is quite possible to hit a stationary target while driving by at twenty or thirty miles per hour if you get within ten feet or so.

If this sounds too complicated you might abandon the idea of shooting altogether and aim the car at him instead. A moving car is a very deadly projectile: a three thousand pound car at thirty miles per hour develops 2,904,000 foot-pounds of kinetic energy. This gives you a clue as to why vehicular accidents result in more deaths every year than do firearms.

If you decide to shoot while moving, slow the car as much as possible and don't rest your gun arm on the window frame. The movement of the car will ruin your aim. Open fire while you're still behind the target to minimize your lead.

If you are in a pursuit you won't have to worry about lead, as the target will be either in front of or behind you. If the target is alongside you don't have to consider lead because you will be very close, even if your speeds do not match exactly.

If you are the one being pursued you have the advantage unless you are unarmed. If you don't have a gun you could throw something out into the road to precipitate a crash. Leaving the rear seat of your car obstructing the road just around a corner, so that when the pursuer sees it he won't have time to stop, is one way to do it. If you have more than a few seconds' lead time you might stop the car to push a more substantial barricade into the road. A more desperate measure is to park your car across the road right around a corner. That will make a barrier that will be hard to avoid and the ensueing crash may well be fatal.

If you are armed fire at the radiator or the driver of the pursueing car. A hit on either one will stop the chase. If you have a bit of time you might park your car off the road and ambush the pursuer with gunfire as he comes into view. If you don't have enough firepower to be sure of annihilating them on the spot make sure a shot goes into their radiator as they drive by. Then you can jump into your car and get going in the opposite direction by the time they turn around and come back. If you have succeeded in hitting their radiator they won't be chasing you for long.

Placing an obstacle around a curve to cause a crash will be a good start to eliminating your pursuer. If you can be there

to shoot any survivors, who will probably be too dazed to put up effective resistance, you will solve your problem right there. In an extreme case, you could leave your car in the road, if you don't need the transportation. The impact will probably wreck both vehicles but at least you will be in an excellent position to finish off the survivors and perhaps you'll be able to commandeer another car nearby.

24. The Ambush

An ambush can be defined as a surprise attack at a selected site where the enemy is known to be coming. In the classical military style an ambush has several components; a stopper, a plugger, a fire team, a security team, and a withdrawal team. We'll take a quick look at these to determine how relevant they are to civilian practice, but keep in mind as we make the comparisons that military ambushes usually deal in units of section up to battalion strength and often involve tanks and artillery of some sort. A civilian ambush can be as simple as one man waiting behind a door.

The stopper stops the enemy units. If it is a convoy of vehicles, the stopper disables the lead vehicle to make a roadblock. The plugger disables the rearmost vehicle to prevent the ambushed unit from retreating. The fire team shoots up the ambushees who are caught in what is termed the killing zone. The security team watches out for additional enemy troops and the withdrawal team covers the retreat after the ambush has been accomplished. The numbers of men involved can be anywhere from six or eight up to a thousand or more. Heavy weapons and even air support can be used. The site of the ambush can cover a lot of territory, several acres or even square miles.

In civilian practice the ambush usually takes the form of a stake-out of some sort. It can be a police-type roadblock. It can be a mixture of both. There may or may not be vehicles involved and the number of participants is much smaller, usually not more than five or six on both sides. The weapons are light hand weapons and the most important item will be the tactics, not the firepower.

To properly set up an ambush you must know that your target will be at a certain place at a certain time. The site should give you a good field of fire and good cover, while offering the target little or no cover or visibility. You could use trees, walls, or buildings as cover while trying to catch your target on a road, a street, or in an open area. The site should be chosen for maximum surprise so that he has no warning before you are calling for his surrender or opening fire. Ideally, the ambush should be around a corner or a bend in the road, or over a hill, so that he cannot see you until it is too late to stop or turn around. If the ambush is to take place inside a building, the problem of attaining surprise is even simpler. For example, in a stake-out, you can easily deploy your men behind cover and concealment inside a building and attain total surprise, as long as you do not leave a police car parked out in front with its lights flashing.

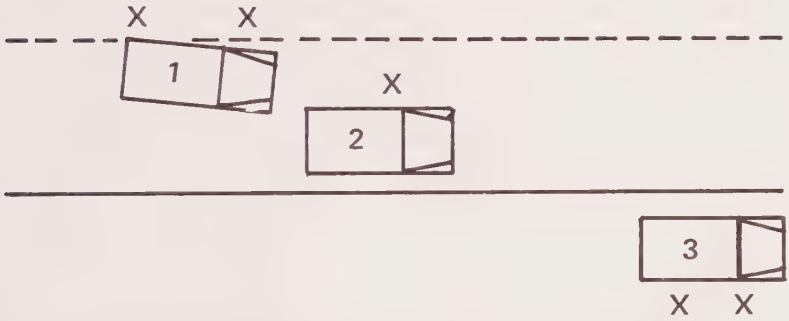
You should select the site to minimize the numbers of innocent passers-by who will be in the area. Some of your people might be assigned the task of keeping the area clear of them. As this is not a military action you cannot open fire indiscriminately.

Set up your people so that they are all behind cover or concealment in such a way that none of them will be caught in their own cross-fire. All exits from the area of the ambush should be blocked, either physically or by fire, so that your target cannot escape. You and your troops should not be visible until they choose to show themselves. Plan a way to cut off the ambushee's retreat.

If you are doing a roadblock operation much will depend upon whether or not you are awaiting a specific vehicle on a specific road or just checking vehicles for fleeing suspects. If you know for sure that a bank robbery gang, for example, will be on a certain road at a certain time, it is easy to set up a classical ambush, if there is little other traffic on that road. If you are just spot-checking, some perfection must be abandoned for the sake of flexibility. For example, in setting up a road-block, you usually have to control the traffic in only one direction, while allowing for the free flow of vehicles in the other direction. You also have to worry about fields of

fire and the problem of catching innocent people in the cross-fire. In addition, you have to expedite the flow of traffic in your direction to avoid unnecessary delays and a line of backed-up traffic that is a tip-off to a suspect that a roadblock is up ahead.

The diagram below shows one good way to do it. This method expedites traffic best even though it is at the expense of surely stopping the suspect vehicle.



Numbers 1 and 3 are the police cars. Number 2 is the suspect vehicle. A police officer waving a red flag or a stop sign slows the traffic down before it reaches the position of the first police car. Officers at the first car check each vehicle, approaching it from the rear. It is best if one or more officers remain behind car number 1, using it as cover, in case the occupants of the vehicle open fire. The officer doing the check can quickly retreat behind the police car if trouble starts. Car number three, several yards down the road, is prepared for pursuit if necessary and its presence acts as a psychological prop, a deterrent.

In this situation, there is free travel even along the lanes you are checking, which minimizes the slow down of traffic. This is better than the S-shaped roadblock, in which police vehicles are parked across the roadway so that any car passing has to first steer right, then left, to negotiate a clear path.

While the S-shaped roadblock forces every vehicle to slow down and prevents a high speed breakthrough, it does impede the flow of traffic and, most importantly, if a shootout develops it prevents innocent vehicles from clearing the area quickly.

The main object here is to avoid endangering innocent people. If a firefight occurs, the occupants of car 3 can wave on any traffic ahead of the suspect car, then drive across the road to stop any traffic in the opposite lane from coming into the danger zone.

Another possibility is to have the occupants of car 3 stop the fleeing suspect vehicle with gunfire, if the situation permits and the suspect vehicle does not stop. Yet another way is to have a tire trap, which can be as simple as a board with large nails or as complex as the spike-studded pantagraphs sold under various trade names. Several flat tires will stop any vehicle from going very far very fast, and it is one good way to stop a suspect vehicle without promiscuous gunfire.

If the road is free of traffic and the circumstances justify it, gunfire can be used very effectively to stop a fleeing vehicle. The car can be hosed down with fire from a submachine gun as it passes car 3, or a shotgun loaded with slugs will do enough damage in the engine compartment to prevent the car from going very far. Finally, if the suspects are armed and dangerous and they are shooting, fire from all available weapons can be poured into the passenger compartment. The most important thing to observe here is to have all of your men on one side of the road so that they can shoot without endangering each other.

If the fleeing car must be stopped without gunfire, another way to do it is to have a truck parked down the road drive across the road, blocking it entirely. The police cars at the check site can be driven to block the road behind the suspects, effectively boxing them in. Again, it is important to avoid trapping innocent vehicles along with the suspects.

A stake-out is a different kind of ambush, one in which the main object is not so much to kill the subject as to arrest him or to prevent him from committing a crime. There is a

subtle distinction here. You are not trying to kill the subject although you are prepared to use deadly force to prevent his getting away.

There are two main types of stake-out, the anti-stick-up stake-out at a store or bank, and the arrest stake-out at the suspect's home, job, or other place he frequents for the purpose of apprehending him. Whatever the locale, the tactics are about the same, and you will need two main teams—

a) A shooting team, to stop the suspect and effect the apprehension, and

b) A backup team to support you and to prevent the suspect's escape if he should get away from the shooting team.

The teams can consist of as little as one or two men, depending on the situation and the number of suspects to be dealt with.

Selecting a site for a stake-out is sometimes a matter of your choice. You might not have a choice of sites if you try to arrest a subject at home, as you cannot control where he lives, but if you are staking out stores or banks you should pick one in an area that is not crowded. Often the suspects will help you in this respect as many robbers prefer to hit a target in a remote or uncrowded area. Few robbers are astute enough to realize that the same crowds that impede them and their getaway also impede the police, therefore you do not often find stores and banks in the center of town being hit at rush hour.

Whatever the situation, the shooting team has the more critical job, for despite the title, *Shooting Team*, it should try to capture the suspect without gunfire. Innocent people may be nearby and it is desireable to make the arrest as quickly and as quietly as possible. If the action takes place in a store the sitck-up artist will probably wait until the place is not too crowded. This helps you. You can also help yourself by replacing the store's staff with police officers and having one or two officers posing as customers.

If there are innocent people on the scene when the hold-up occurs your team must be imaginative and flexible. One tactic is to make the arrest with one man getting up close to

the suspect and using a pistol or a blackjack if the situation permits. A female officer may be able to do this without arousing the suspect's suspicions as she approaches him. A blackjack is not as dramatic as gunfire but it is a lot safer for bystanders if the suspect can be disabled by knocking him out rather than by shooting him.

The tactic of policemen with shotguns popping up and yelling: "Freeze-police" sometimes works but it often results in panicking the suspect and leading to an unnecessary shoot-out. This is not bad in itself but the ever-present possibility of innocent people being caught in the cross-fire cannot be over-emphasized. This is particularly true because, even though you may have sited your team so that their shots go into a wall or some backstop if they miss, the suspect may not be so careful when he opens fire and his shots may go wild and carry for blocks. This emphasizes the importance of putting him down as quickly as possible and thereby giving him as little opportunity to shoot as possible.

In extreme circumstances it may be desirable to wait until the suspect or suspects have left the premises and to make the arrest in the street where there may be fewer people.

The backup team details one man as a lookout to give warning of the suspect's vehicle, if there is one, to impede his escape. The simplest way is to lift the hood and rip out the ignition wires. Don't waste time trying to remove the distributor rotor. Ripping out the wires does the same thing and takes much less time. As an added precaution removing the wires altogether will ensure that the car cannot be started at all, in the unlikely eventuality that the suspect has the opportunity to look under the hood. If the hood is locked, slashing a coolant hose will prevent him from going very far. Other ways to disable the car are slashing the tires or brake lines, or cutting the gas line. Shooting into the engine will do it too but this is the last extreme, as the noise will warn him that something is wrong. If one suspect stays with the car as get-away driver, he can be dealt with at this time.

Flexibility is the most important ingredient in a stakeout. Many times an arrest is botched and innocent people endan-

gered because those making the arrest were not imaginative enough to change plans at the last moment.

Sometimes it is better to let the suspect leave, follow him, and make the arrest in another spot. A more remote area, with fewer bystanders, is more desireable as an arrest site if there is danger of a shootout.

If the suspect is at home, it is safer to climb in a window and place the handcuffs on him when he is asleep than to have a shootout that gets headlines but can also get people killed.

The stake-out is different from the conventional ambush and the fireworks are often of less importance than the tactics.

You may be caught in an ambush yourself. This is particularly true if you are a police officer on patrol in a marked car. Several times a year someone opens fire on a police car by surprise. Often this happens in the city, where distances are short and cover and concealment are plentiful. Another possibility of ambush is if you are a civilian traveling during a time of disorder or civil war.

The conventional wisdom regarding the proper response to an ambush is to immediately charge the enemy with everything you've got. This makes good reading but it is most likely to get you killed. There is, actually, a whole range of responses possible to an ambush and the response you choose will depend heavily upon the mistakes that the ambusher makes. As there are not very many perfect ambush sites, there also not very many perfect ambushers. Often, the situation does not permit covering all of the contingencies. That leaves gaps in the plan and these are the opportunities that you must take to save yourself.

In the perfect ambush, you are immediately immobilized. You cannot go forward or back. There is no cover for you at all. The enemy has you surrounded and bottled up. All you can do is surrender or die. You cannot even return the fire effectively because the ambushers are all under good cover: you cannot even see where they are.

In reality, it is quite different. The ambushers sometimes can be classified as casual snipers. Often they are inept and

inexperienced. They don't have the resources or the knowledge to set up an effective ambush. Take advantage of their mistakes.

The first mistake is early warning. Some signs are visible at times that an ambush is in the making. You may see furtive movements from a long way off. You may see signs of a roadblock. You might see movement on a roof or behind a window. This permits you to stop and avoid entering the danger area or to be more alert as you are passing through. If the ambush is by fire only, and there is nothing blocking the road, speeding up as you drive through the danger zone will often save you.

Anything blocking the road, however innocent looking, is a warning. An overturned vehicle, a felled tree, debris, a large hole in the roadway, or any obstruction may not be there just by coincidence. Be alert.

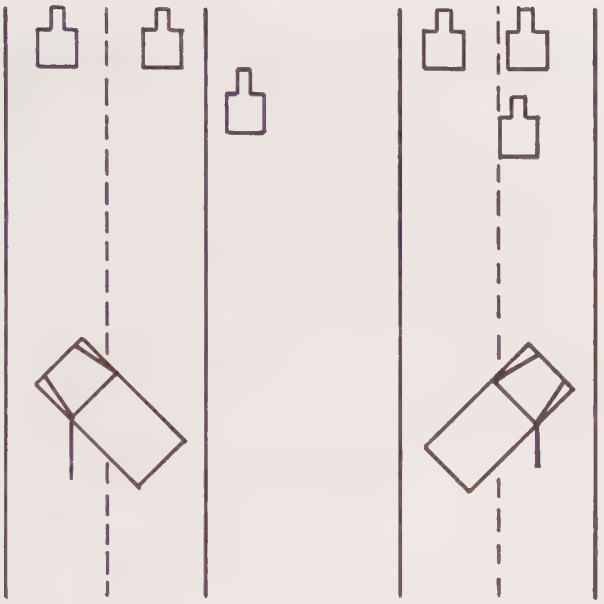
Sometimes one of the ambushers gets trigger-happy and a premature shot warns you.

Sometimes the situation itself is suggestive. If on foot any open door should make you cautious. A window, a piece of furniture big enough to conceal an ambusher, or just going around a corner should warn you.

If the ambushers suddenly pop up in the street or road in front of you as you are driving along it is often easy to drive right through them. The critical factor here is reaction time. Keep in mind that a car travels forty-four feet in one second at thirty miles per hour, eighty-eight at sixty. How far away are they? How long would it take you to stop your car and to take cover? It might be faster to ram them.

If the time and distance make you decide to stop and shoot it out right there, you have two possibilities. If you are alone, turn your car at a forty-five degree angle to the left as you stop. Get out your door and use the car as cover. If you have a partner, turn to the right. Your partner gets out first and uses the engine of the car as cover. You dive out after him and go to the rear of the car to return fire. The diagrams at the top of the next page show this clearly.

It is important to point out a few subtleties about this situation. First, getting out of the car ready to fire is a tactic



that can be used in other circumstances, such as responding to a robbery in progress call. Secondly, the way in which you get out of the car and the position that you take are critical.

The car is not very good cover. Using the door of the car for cover, as shown on TV, is foolishness. The engine is the most solid part of the car. If you are alone the fastest way to pile out and get into action is to turn left and pile out of your door. If you have a partner the fastest way for both of you is to turn the car right and for both of you to pile out of the passenger side door. If you have any doubts about this try getting past the steering wheel and out the door starting from the passenger seat. It is difficult enough but if you are carrying a carbine or a shotgun it is very slow indeed.

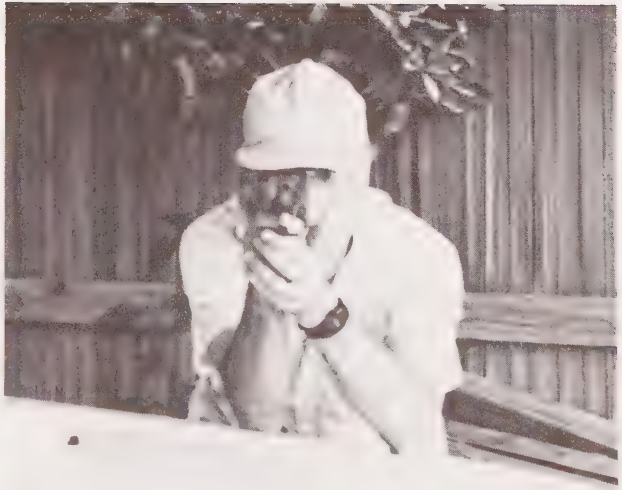
The passenger, if he is "riding shotgun" and has a shotgun or a carbine available, will want to take the weapon with him as he dives out of the car. It is important to avoid riding with the weapon between the knees, otherwise it will create a tangle as the passenger tries to get the gun and his legs sorted out preparatory to piling out. The best place is to hold it

If you are under fire, don't worry about your dignity. Duck down and dive out, even if it is into the dirt or a mud puddle. Don't worry too much about skinning your hands or knees, either. Neither injury is fatal.

"Riding shotgun" the wrong way. It might seem natural and comfortable to hold the weapon, in this case a carbine, between your knees, but if you have to get out the door in a hurry you'll get your legs tangled up with it.

The best way to carry a rifle or shotgun is to keep it on the left side of your legs and hold it with your left hand. That leaves your right hand free to open the door and to release the seat belt if you wear one. If you do wear a belt, use your right hand to release it even if the catch is on the left. You will have time to do this as the driver brakes the car. Then you can open the door. Note the pistol. The holster is suitable for riding in a car, unlike some of the "fast draw" rigs.

When the rifle or shotgun is held on the left, it is not in the way of your legs as you dive out the door and you can use your right hand to break your fall. You must get out fast to let the driver flop across the seat, otherwise you leave him in a very exposed position.



Don't brace yourself on the hood of the car for cover. You will be silhouetted and too exposed. The engine will stop bullets, but that's a help only if you are behind it. Fire around the end of the car.

Don't forget the view from below. Your legs will be somewhat exposed, but that's better than having your head and chest exposed!

with the left hand on the left side. The right hand can be used to open the car door. The passenger dives out, trailing the shotgun or carbine behind him. The driver pivots on his hips to get flat on the seat and crawls out behind the passenger, who has already cleared the doorway and is returning fire from behind the engine.

If the shooting takes place from a building you can drive into the nearest alley or driveway on the same side of the street as the snipers. This will give you cover while you radio for help. If there is no driveway snuggle up close to the building line, right up on the sidewalk. That way the suspects will have to lean out to shoot at you, exposing themselves to your observation and fire.

You see this on TV a lot, but in real life a car door is not bullet-proof. If it is your own car and you feel that someday you may need the protection, you could have a sheet of lightweight armor put in, provided there is room for it.

You can take advantage of the temporary cover or concealment to try to circle around and outflank them.

Another mistake that ambushers make is to fail to choose a site that is wide-open and provides no cover to the ambushee. This is unavoidable in an urban environment, as we have seen from the above discussion, but sometimes it is possible to be caught in an ambush where there is little obvious cover. There are no convenient walls or foxholes in the middle of a street or out in the middle of a field.

Being caught in the open is a dangerous and frightening situation but there are many countermeasures possible, even

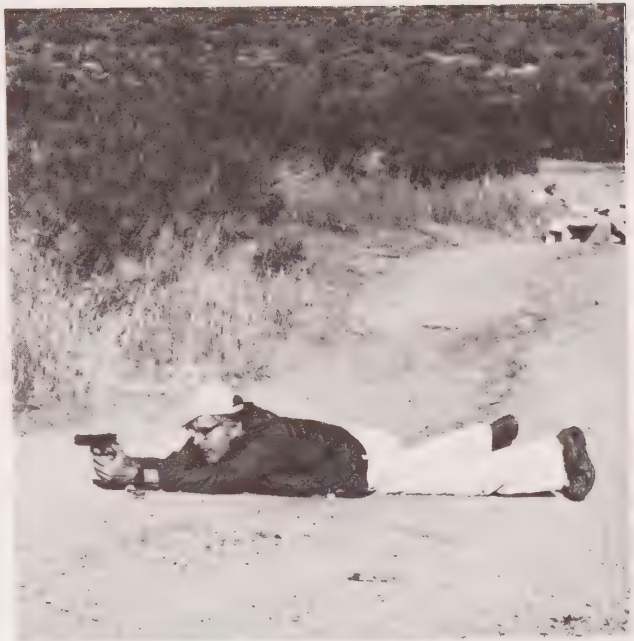
though there is some controversy over precisely what to do if fired upon. Various "experts" put forth various solutions in a dogmatic way that sounds convincing but does not cope with the problem. Actually the proper action will depend very heavily on the situation and common sense will be the best guide. Analyzing the various possibilities shows several factors that affect the decision and each one must be evaluated and the action thought out in advance. You can't stand there

The best solution, if you simply must fire from behind the car door, is to angle the door as shown above. Tests have shown that a bullet's penetration depends on the angle at which it strikes. The flimsy door will do better at deflecting bullets if it is angled to the direction from which the bullets are coming. Roll the window down into the door for somewhat better protection (and to avoid a spray of shattered glass). Remember, though, that your feet are still visible under the door. To determine what bullets your car door will actually stop when angled, you could get a door from a wrecked car of the same make and model for testing purposes. The way they build cars today ...

The entire car body offers good protection, if you use it. To reach you, a bullet would have to pass through the hood and two seats, as well as the trunk lid, dashboard, firewall, and other odds and ends which might be in the way (such as the engine, radiator, spare tire, etc.). This protection holds true only if you stay below window level, though.

and think about it when you're being shot at — you must know what you're going to do and then do it. In a gunfight, the most important thing, particularly if you're being shot at and taken by surprise, is to move. Standing there will get you killed.

1) The first factor is whether or not you know where the shots are coming from. If you don't, you can't return fire until you find out. Don't stand there peering around — go for cover at once. If cover is not close by either go prone or make a run for it. Whatever you do, don't stand still.



The use of dead ground is illustrated here. Notice the small target made as seen from the front. You need only a few inches of rolling terrain to give you this effect. In fact, you will find dead ground everywhere except where the ground has been artificially levelled, as in a park or on a football field. Even a highway often has low spots on the shoulders.

Drawing your gun is a low second priority. You can't shoot what you can't see and loosing off a few shots in the general direction of the opponent's fire to "keep his head down" is just a bluff and a waste of precious ammunition. It may give you satisfaction but your assailant will realize that you're shooting out of desperation and will be able to use the extra time you're giving him to draw a bead on you.

Don't even think of returning fire until you're either under cover or have gone prone and reduced the size of the target you present.

2) The second factor is range to the opponent, if you know where he is. You then make a snap judgment whether you can put him down or get under cover faster. Most of the time the decision can be pre-planned. For example:

a) If your opponent is several dozen yards away you just have to duck around the corner of a brick building to get under cover the best thing for you to do is duck.

b) If the range to your assailant is about five yards and there is no cover nearby, going prone might not reduce the size of target you make enough to save your life. Then going for your gun while ducking and rolling to spoil his aim would be the best course of action for you. If you tried to run for it, you would probably be shot while doing so.

c) At contact range there is no chance to get under cover but it may be possible to reach out and deflect the muzzle of your opponent's gun with your non-shooting hand while you draw and fire with the other.

3) The third factor is the speed of your reaction and your skill with the gun you are carrying. You should know in advance how quickly you can draw and fire accurately at various ranges. If you can draw, fire, and hit faster than you can reach cover, you might elect to shoot it out right there. If not, then reaching cover has the highest priority. On the other hand, if both of you are out in the open, your opponent has either just stopped to reload or had a jam, and you feel

A curb will shield you. Don't worry about dirt or water in the gutter. Get as flat as you can and shoot back!

confident that you can hit him before he can get back into action, then the choice is clear.

4) The fourth factor is whether or not your attacker is under cover himself, making him a smaller and more difficult target. If so, then you should see to your own cover before trying anything else.

Shooting at an opponent behind cover is a special technique and should not be a matter of popping up and down and taking shots at random. The first step is to decide where your opponent is most likely to appear to shoot. After aiming at that spot, you wait for him to pop up, then let him have it. If he pops up at a different spot, fire anyway. He will surely duck down before realizing exactly what it is you are doing and perhaps the next time he will pop up right in your sights. In any event it is important to give him no time to regain the initiative and keep you pinned down.

5) The fifth and final factor is whether or not you have been hit by the first shots, and if so how badly. If you are partially disabled or immobilized so that you cannot reach

cover, you will have to go prone and shoot it out on the spot. You have no choice. If the wound is such that you judge that it will soon be fatal, you will find that the only thing for you to do is keep firing, but from the prone position to minimize the chances of your attacker scoring more hits on you and speeding your demise. If the wound is minor you can carry on as previously planned.

25. Night Encounters

Many, many shootouts take place at night or in bad light, as any cop knows. Nevertheless, most firearms training and practice takes place in the daytime. It seems absurd but this is so. Also, many police departments require their men to wear uniforms that will only betray their position at night. Granted that blue is a dark color that blends in well with the shadows, but a badge and bright brass buttons negate all that. Also, the many bits of metal that a policeman carries on his uniform and as parts of his equipment rattle. This makes it doubly difficult to operate effectively under conditions of darkness.

Whether you are a police officer or a civilian, try to wear dark clothing if you expect to be in a shootout at night. You can be sure that a professional burglar does not wear bright clothing and that he is astute enough to tape his keys together and to take all of the change out of his pockets before he sets out on a job. This is not to say that you will be shooting it out with burglars — most of them go unarmed and try to avoid detection rather than prepare for an armed confrontation. This illustrates the precaution that a pro takes.

How do you know whether to "expect" to be in a shootout at night? There are some clues. If you are a police officer working the night shift it is obvious. What is not so obvious is that many dangerous situations can occur in bad conditions of illumination during the daylight hours too. Buildings are not always well lit. There are confrontations in stores, theaters, and basements that occur during the daylight hours. All of these are particularly taxing.

Preparing for a night encounter is as important as the tactics that you use while it happens. Some of the precautions

that you can take are to avoid wearing bright clothing and avoid carrying anything that will make noise and give away your position. Loose items in your pocket, be they keys or change, should be wrapped in your handkerchief to prevent rattling. Keys that you do not often use should be taped together. If you are a police administrator, permit your men to wear plain black or blue buttons on their uniforms and to carry their badges in their pockets, if you feel that a badge is still an essential part of the police uniform.

Painting your sights with dabs of white paint is a good precaution. Our tests show that white is most easily seen at night. Orange or red looks black at night. Most luminous paints have to be exposed to a source of light before they glow. This may not be possible. On the other hand, if you choose to use luminous paint, you might have the opportunity to give it a brief flash with your flashlight before going into the situation, if you remember.

There are several types of night-sights available. One type uses radioactive elements to make your sights glow at night. It is expensive and in addition you need a license from the Atomic Energy Commission to own it. It will not be very popular among police officers or anyone else.

Another has small light emitting diodes built into the sights. They are powered by a small hearing aid battery that fits into the grip. A push button turns on the lights when you squeeze the grip. This also works but it is expensive and elaborate. You must be sure that your battery does not go dead for the device to work.

Some specific tactics for night shooting will be helpful but the most practical thing you can do is to do the bulk of your practicing at night. Learning to shoot effectively under adverse conditions is far more useful than memorizing a list of do's and don'ts.

Use your flashlight very carefully, if you are forced to do so. Every cop knows that it makes a target of him and that it is best to hold it as far away from your body as possible. One useful trick with a flashlight is to place it on the ground or some support, such as a wall or a car roof, turn it on and step

quickly away. That way you can illuminate a potential target without making a target of yourself.

If you have to fire at night you will note that the muzzle flash will show you your sight alignment very clearly. If you are alert this will enable you to correct your aim if it is off. While very often your opponent will be so close that you will not have to use the sights there are still those situations that arise in which you do, if you can see them.

If you can't see the target clearly shoot low rather than high. Fire in bursts of two or three. This will give you a chance of a ricochet hit and the several shots will maximize the spread and the chances of a hit.

If your opponent fires at you return fire to the right of his gun flashes unless you have reason to think that he's left-handed.

If you have to fire, change position or get under cover immediately after firing. He'll be shooting back at your gun flashes.

If you're working with a partner the two of you should spread out. Your partner should try to illuminate the adversary's background from a covered position rather than to light up the target directly. This will silhouette him without giving him warning.

In many night encounters a shotgun will be worth having and the possessor of the shotgun will have a decisive superiority in the battle. Where the target is more than ten or fifteen feet away and there is little or no illumination, most people cannot hit with a pistol. We have found this to be true through many trials and many scenarios run at night. Even luminous sights are of little help if you cannot see the target, at least partially.

A shotgun loaded with shot, not slugs, will help a lot. The shotgun comes into its own at ranges beyond ten or fifteen feet where dispersion begins. You will maximize your chances of a hit by using a shotgun at the ranges where the pistol becomes ineffective. At thirty feet the pattern from a cylindrical bore shotgun is about two feet in diameter, which compensates for a lot of aiming error.

The shotgun is particularly valuable in case of an ambush at night, where the enemy is prepared and you are taken by surprise. Reaching for a flashlight to illuminate your opponent takes up valuable time that you cannot spare and it will give your enemy a well-lit aiming point. Even holding it at arm's length will not help because the ambushers, knowing that night firing is imprecise, will be pouring a storm of fire around every potential target.

The flash from a shotgun at night seems as bright as an atom bomb. This will advertise your position and is the reason why you should immediately duck behind cover or change position after firing.

Luminous paint on the sights is very useful for shooting at night. Unfortunately, luminous paint must first be activated by light before it will glow. Radium-based paint, which would generate its own light through radio-activity, has been illegal for many years. It is no longer available unless you are lucky enough to find an old radium-dial watch in which the radium is not exhausted. White paint is a good alternate. Red, orange, and other colors do not show up well at night, even if they are the new "flourescent" colors. White reflects all light which falls on it while colored paints absorb part of the spectrum.

26. Barricaded Opponents

You may be in a situation in which you must overcome or flush out a barricaded opponent from a building or a room within a building. The suspect may or may not be armed: you'd better assume that he is. He may or may not have a hostage: if he does it's another type of situation altogether.

There are several schools of thought on how to handle this sort of situation. We will examine each one, taking the unrealistic ones first and treating them briefly in order to get to the serious discussion as soon as possible.

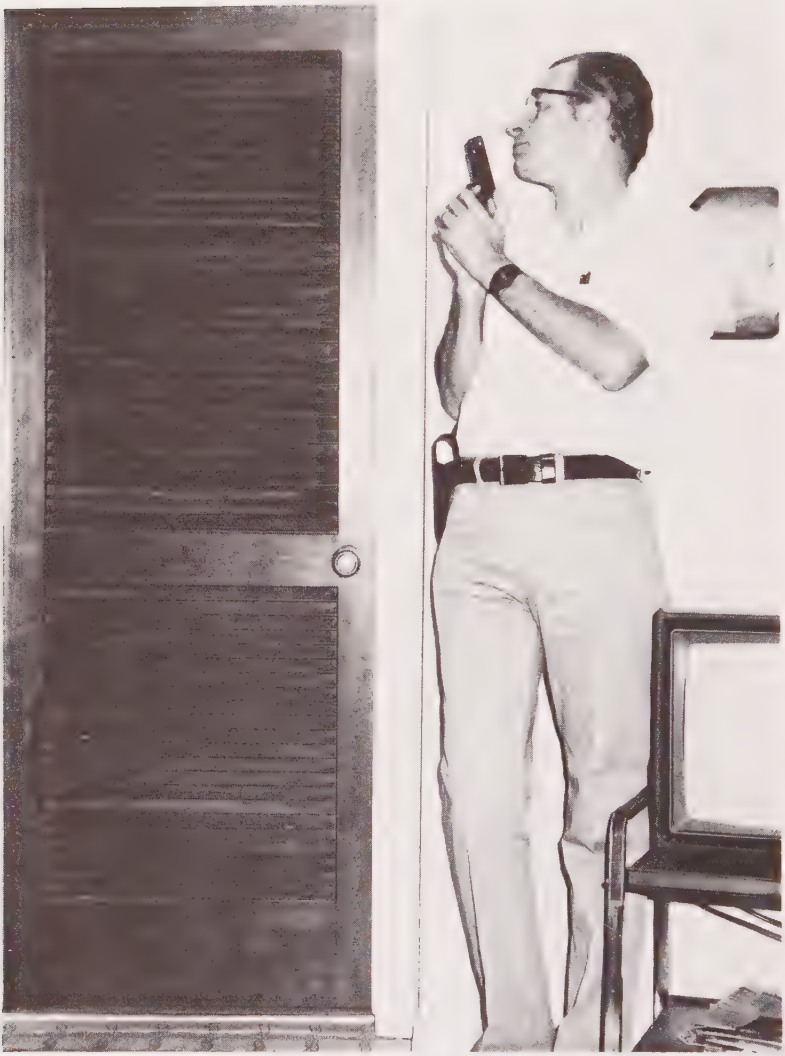
The TV cop approach. Standing in front of the door and kicking it in is one of the best ways to get yourself killed. Most doors and the walls around them are far from bullet-proof. The person in the room can make you eligible for an inspector's funeral very quickly.

Commando tactics. Another school of thought is to fire into the room after blowing down the door and then to make a violent entry, diving crossways into the area just inside the door. Your partner can cover you by firing into the corners and then join you in the room for the arduous task of shooting it out toe to toe with the suspect. This is a horribly risky procedure and despite the fact that I outlined it in detail in my previous book, *Shootout* it is not the best way to go.

The best way to do it is also the safest. First, make sure that you set up a perimeter if you are the police commander on the scene. Exclude the public from sight of the action, not only because of the very real danger to innocent lives but because you do not want witnesses. Excluding potential witnesses is not for the purpose of covering up anything illegal or unsavory that you might do but rather to avoid conflicting testimony as to what actually happened. Witnesses are

The "Television Sydnrome" can be a sure-fire guarantee of failure. What is that wall made of? It might be as flimsy as the door. A couple of bullets coming through it will cancel your birth certificate right there.

Crouching beside the door is almost as bad as standing next to it. Crouching presents a smaller target, but the torso's angle to the wall would allow a bullet coming through the wall to puncture both lungs instead of one.



The "Television Syndrome" again. The TV cops don't get killed doing this but if you try it you may get a nasty surprise. Neither the door nor the wall right next to it are any great protection. Keep this in mind if you ever have to defend yourself against an intruder who decides to do it the way he saw it on TV.

This looks great on TV, but so does a silencer on a revolver. Remember, the TV cops know they'll come through unscathed, no matter how inept their actions, because the script says so. When you're shooting for real, you can't afford the luxury of mistakes.

This is what the "Television Syndrome" can look like to an opponent who is lying on the floor waiting for you as you come crashing in. You are well silhouetted and he has a clear shot at you.

Not as spectacular as kicking the door in, but a lot safer. At least you make a smaller target of yourself. Ease the door open and peer inside after waiting for the reaction, if any. Anyone waiting behind the door will not have a clear shot at you if you stay on the handle side of the door instead of the hinge side. Above all, be prepared to retreat. Don't charge into that room to try to shoot it out toe to toe unless there is a compelling reason, such as hostages to be protected. By the way, did you bring an armored vest?

notoriously unreliable, as any lawyer or policeman knows, and often misinterpret what they see even in broad daylight.

Once you are satisfied that the area is secured you can call for the suspect to surrender. This is easier said than done. If you have a force of police at your command you will feel much more authoritative than if you are a householder who has trapped a thief. If the suspect does not come out you have several choices.

The initial step is to create an opening. Open the door. Just that and nothing more. Sneak up and do it from the doorknob side, because that way you avoid reaching across the door to reach the knob and exposing yourself more than necessary. Then you wait for the reaction, if any.

At this point it would be helpful to have a mirror so that you may see what or who is in the room without exposing yourself. An automotive mirror on a length of rod will do very well. If you are a member of a SWAT group or some such, you might even have a mirror glued on the stock of your rifle or shotgun for this purpose.

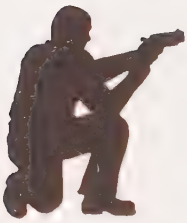
Once you find out what is going on in the room you can make a further decision. You might decide to try a subterfuge. Throw in a heavy object, such as a full beer can or a heavy ashtray and yell "Grenade". This may bring your suspect running out. If not, you may decide to use stronger measures. You might have access to tear gas or something stronger. If so, use it to flush the suspect out or to disable him while causing the minimum property damage. One caution to observe is that some tear gas devices can start fires.

If more forceful measures are needed shooting through the walls with a rifle or a shotgun loaded with slugs will usually do it. Most shoulder weapons fire their projectiles with enough force to penetrate the walls and still have enough power left over to cause a serious or even a fatal wound.

You might be in a situation where the presence of other structures nearby or innocent people who cannot be evacuated inhibits the use of gunfire. In that case be prepared to improvise. You must be imaginative and flexible. A bottle of ammonia or acetic acid thrown into the room will soon make

the air unbreathable. If the suspect is holed up in a basement you may be able to flood him out. A garden hose can do wonders for you then.

If all else fails don't be in a rush to go in. Make a gasoline bomb, throw it in, and burn the damn place down.



27. Defending Yourself In A Room

In certain circumstances you may have to defend yourself against opponents who are trying to get into or flush you out of a room. The conventional wisdom is to park yourself behind the heftiest piece of cover you can find and be prepared to shoot anyone who comes through the door. If you do that you will be doing exactly what they expect you to do and thereby making their task easier. There are better ways.

The first thing to do when entering a room in which you expect to be assaulted is to look for the exits. Most rooms do have at least one exit, even if it is a window. If you are being chased try to avoid running into a room which will be a cul-de-sac. Most of the time you can avoid this. Rarely are you in an area so unfamiliar to you that you do not have at least some idea of where you are going.

An exit is important for two critical reasons. One, you must have a line of retreat. Secondly, it is best to defend a room from outside. This may sound like a revolutionary idea to you but it is true. If you park yourself inside the room proper you may be vulnerable to gunfire, tear gas, gasoline bombs, and any other nasties your opponent decides to use against you. If he comes charging in you will have to shoot it out with him toe to toe.

If you pick a spot just through another doorway you will be in a better position most of the time. If you are in an office or a bedroom, there is usually a bathroom adjacent. Many offices are actually suites, with a front and an inner office. Most homes consist of more than one room.

Lock the door through which your enemies will come, if you can. If the door has no lock, wedge a chair or some other

Any commando-type who comes crashing through this door will get a big surprise. The theory is that he will come in low and immediately go prone while he searches for you. If he stops in time, he will hesitate in the doorway, giving you a good shot at a still and silhouetted target. If he is going too fast, he will crash into the obstructions. He'll be in a world of hurt and you can finish him off.

piece of furniture under the knob. Be prepared to meet the several kinds of attack that are possible.

The first is the TV cop attack. Be prepared to shoot through the door at anyone foolish enough to try to kick the door in.

The next approach is the commando tactics one. Arrange some small pieces of furniture around the doorway, far enough away to clear the swing of the door. Then turn out the lights. If they try to shoot open the door and then come diving in, anyone charging in through the doorway will dive right into the furniture and injure himself. If he sees it in time and his reflexes are fast, he will probably hesitate right

in the doorway while sorting it out in his mind. Then you shoot him. If he does succeed in diving into the room, crashing into furniture as he comes, the noise will guide you as to where to shoot to finish him off. A few shots through the wall on either side of the door, if your ammunition supply permits, will nail his partner.

You have the room covered — from the doorway of an adjacent room. If you are forced to retreat you are already halfway there. Meanwhile, anyone crashing into the room you are defending won't find you there. Keep low to the floor. Interior walls are nowhere near bulletproof.

Take advantage of any pause in the action to arrange your next defensive position, if the layout permits this. If not, give serious thought to getting away, even if it means diving out of a second story window. Your enemy may have accomplices who might at that very moment be completing your encirclement. Keep in mind that nobody is perfect and that they might not have you surrounded yet. The more time you allow them the more chance they have of plugging the gaps.

The next step in the assault, if you have not eliminated your opponents by now, might be a tear gas bomb, a grenade, or a firebomb. This is when you will really appreciate not being in the same room with that infernal machine. As soon as you detect it, close your door. You can be sure that they will not come charging in while their device is working. They will most likely wait for it to cook you alive or to flush you out.

You must have your next step decided upon. You might retreat to yet another room, if there is one, you might decide to go out of a window, if you are not ten stories off the ground, or you might decide to wait, if the threat is not too severe. If you decide to wait, keep quiet. They might think that you are dead or unconscious. You can shoot at the opportune moment.

A shotgun or carbine is very handy in room defense. The superior penetrating power of the ammunition will be to your advantage. You can pop off your adversaries through the walls. This will be particularly useful to you if your attackers have a party covering the rear exit. You can kill the ones outside the room and run boldly out the front, leaving the ones in the rear anxiously awaiting their share of the action.

Always be alert to the need for escape and the opportunities for doing so. Don't be too bloodthirsty, no matter how good your defensive position. Your survival comes first. If they are all clustered in front you might get out of a back door or window after the initial exchange of fire, while they are sorting out their casualties and getting reorganized.

28. Home Defense

You have all of the advantages when you set out to defend your home against intruders. You know the layout and they don't. You have had time to plan thoroughly and they have to improvise. Even the advantage of surprise is not necessarily theirs if you take steps to provide yourself with early warning devices.

The first thing to think of is choosing a weapon. Most people would choose a pistol, not necessarily the best choice. A pistol is light, handy, and very easy to keep on your person or next to your bed. However, you have to consider the problem of penetrating power. You do not want to shoot through many walls and risk killing or injuring innocent people. Assess your home and its layout. Look at the surrouding houses or apartments, then decide whether or not you want a weapon that will have limited penetration. A pistol will penetrate any interior wall with enough force to injure or kill someone beyond. A shotgun can be loaded with birdshot, which will devastate anyone in the same room but will not carry well through walls or over a long distance. A rifle is almost always unsuitable for home defense. It penetrates too much and is suitable only for use in rural areas.

Choosing the right ammunition is critical. With a shotgun, No. 8 birdshot will kill at short ranges. It will, at ranges up to ten or fifteen feet, penetrate an interior wall with enough force to kill or injure anyone standing behind it.

If you decide to use a pistol, get the lightest hollow point bullets you can find. They usually will penetrate a wall but will not carry as far as solid bullets.

The reason for choosing ammunition that will penetrate interior walls is that an intruder may take cover behind a wall

You can make it easy for an intruder by keeping your windows clear and unobstructed (top). It is not too difficult to arrange your furniture and knicknacks around each window so that anyone coming in will make a lot of noise knocking things over and perhaps stumbling over them (bottom). When selecting objects to place on the windowsills choose items such as pottery, glass, and metal things that rattle. In this regard, remember that metal venetian blinds make more noise than shades or curtains.

When planning the defense of your home you want some assurance that your gunfire will not penetrate too much and endanger innocent people. A charge of No. 8 birdshot fired at thirty-three feet behaves like this, spreading out and not penetrating even an interior wall completely. This gives you a margin of safety if there are innocent people nearby, yet the load is a killer at shorter ranges.

in the mistaken belief that it will protect him against your fire. Therefore you must have a load that will penetrate but not too much. You don't want to shoot into a house on the next block.

It is obvious that home defense should be planned, not improvised. Nevertheless, many a householder has successfully defended his home against an intruder because he was intimately familiar with the layout and the intruder wasn't. Still, a little planning will make it much easier when the moment comes. It will give you a feeling of security because you will know what you are doing.

There are three elements in a home defense plan: warning, shelter, and fields of fire. The first, warning, can be covered quickly because it is so obvious. You should know who is coming into your home at all times, day and night. Never open your door when the bell rings unless you know who is there. You should also have some passive warning systems to alert you if someone tries to get in without ringing the bell. Entrances, both doors and windows, should be obstructed in a shade or blinds. This makes noise when someone tries to creep in.

Furniture should be arranged so that nobody can step from a window directly into a room without knocking something over, tripping, or making some noise to alert you. Doorlocks can be picked. You should leave something leaning against every outside door, something that will fall over and make a noise if the door is opened. Alternatively, a bell can be mounted on the inside of every door.

In preparing your plan, try to see the situations as an intruder would. Walk around the outside of your house, both in the daytime and at night. See what an intruder would see. Look in every window and note carefully what can be seen. This is important in planning your shelter, or cover.

You will want to find a place where your family can hide out until it is safe. Usually, the bathroom is the best place because it is at the interior of the house in many cases, and there is a set of features which makes the bathroom better than other rooms for shelter. If there is a window, it usually is small and frosted, making it impossible to see in. The

door has a lock on it, which will impede forced entry somewhat. Also, the bathtub or shower enclosure offer a greater resistance to gunfire than do typical interior walls. Finally, the bathroom usually has only one entrance, which can be covered from the inside if your wife is armed. It is a last-ditch defense in depth if you are disabled or killed.

You can improve on the bathroom's ability to deflect bullets. Some plywood or sheet steel inside the cabinets makes very inconspicuous armor. A sheet of mild steel one quarter of an inch thick will stop a 9mm armor-piercing bullet, as one example.

While you are planning shelter you should also give some thought to protecting your firing point. A bullet resistant position helps to enhance your chances of survival. There are several ways to protect yourself from gunfire. One is to pick a position that is around a corner from the intruder's line of approach. An interior wall is poor protection if fired at straight on, but it is a different case if the fire is oblique. The bullets will have to penetrate a row of 2"x4" studs before they get to you, and the studs will stop almost anything. If you are around a corner the only way an opponent can shoot at you, except for exposed parts of your body, is obliquely through the wall.

If you cannot choose such a position you can still shade the odds in your favor if you take cover behind a cabinet or other piece of furniture which you have prepared with a piece of steel inside.

If none of this is possible you are not in a hopeless position. Most of the time, speed and surprise will work in your favor. If you shot the intruder before he is even aware that you're awake, you won't need any armor.

The next thing to plan is fields of fire. Study each way the intruder might come in. Remove anything that might offer him cover or concealment. Decide upon where he will be when you open fire. Most of the time your best shot will be when he is coming in the door or window, silhouetted against the frame if you remembered to leave the outside lights on.

Always be aware of what is behind each position you pick in case you miss the intruder and your shots go wild. That is why it is often good to shoot from a low position so that you are aiming upward. This will avoid sending your shots into a neighbor's window.

The law in most states is that an intruder must be in your house before you can shoot him. As a rule, you can't shoot a prowler in your yard or someone trying to pick the lock. In any event, if you become aware of an intruder before he actually tries to enter, call the cops first.

If you shoot an intruder in dubious circumstances, you can always drag him inside the house, let him bleed on your carpet a bit, then drag him out again, telling the cops when they come that you shot him inside but dragged him outside to avoid ruining your carpet. The physical evidence will usually not trip you up. However, survival is the first rule.

If there are multiple intruders you may well want to shoot first, regardless. Indeed, it would be good tactics to reduce the odds against you. Once the shooting starts the rule book goes out the window. You shoot at any that you can see, inside or out. Let the lawyers argue it out later. Would you rather pay a lawyer or an undertaker?

As a final touch, you will want to be aware of every spot an intruder might take for concealment. Look at every wall, every door. Determine its vulnerability to your gunfire. You might find, for example, that one intruder is coming in the window while another is waiting outside the door for the first one to let him in. If your front door is the usual flimsy wood construction, you can send half a dozen shots through it after you nail the one climbing in the window.

Two points not often considered are having a noisy pet, such as a dog, and having a cache of throwaways to solidify your legal position. A dog will often deter a burglar just by the noise he makes. This is invaluable. If you already have a dog you are ahead of the game. If you don't, consider getting one unless you already have a cat. A cat, if you are a light sleeper, will sometimes wake you up if an intruder tries to get in. However, cats are not usually as good for this as dogs are.

Of course, an attack dog is best, as he can do half your job for you, but how many of us have one?

The other point, throwaways, is very important. If you have a couple of knives that you picked up for the purpose at a rummage sale, ones that you do not usually use so that nobody knows they are yours, you can plant them in the hands of any intruder you kill to make your legal position better. Self-defense is good grounds for justifiable homicide. A couple of sticks or pipes, which you can say looked like guns in the dark, will also do. Best of all are guns. If you are a policeman you have had opportunities to confiscate guns which cannot be traced to you.

When The Moment Comes

You are most likely to be awakened by a sound. Hopefully, you will come awake fast enough to be effective. If there is time, your wife will go into the bathroom with the children and her pistol, or perhaps to go out the bedroom window to a neighbor's house to call the police.

You reach under the bed for your weapon, which should be fully loaded, safety off. You go out of the bedroom to do a reconnaissance. If the outside lights are on, you can see what is going on more easily. Remember to keep to the dark corners in your house. Don't use a flashlight and don't turn on the lights in every room you enter. If the interior is secure try to determine what or whom made the noise. The outside lights should be bright enough for you to see whoever is out there, but not so bright that they illuminate the interior and leave you no pockets of darkness in which to hide. Don't be trigger-happy at this stage. The noise may have been caused by the neighborhood drunk trying his key at the wrong door.

Evaluate the situation. How many intruders are there? How close are they to coming in? Can they hear you if you phone the police? In that connection, can your wife call the police from the bathroom? If you are like most Americans you don't have a phone in the bathroom. It seems to be a fact of life that the phone always rings when you're in the

bathroom and many people wish that they had an extension in there but never do anything about it.

The most frightening thing is to wake up to find the intruder in the same room with you. If this happens to you play possum and pretend that you're still asleep. Our scenarios have shown that it is impossible to get the weapon out from under the bed or out of a drawer before he is on top of you. Only if you sleep with the gun in your hand do you have a decent chance of bringing him down before he gets to you and even then it is a close thing.

If you feel that you are going to have to shoot, take up your prepared position. You should by this time, considering the flimsiness of interior walls, be certain of the location of every member of your family.

The decision of whether or not to shoot is a complex one. You may, if you see that the intruder is just a kid, call upon him to surrender. He may, or he may turn on you. He may be only a youthful-appearing career criminal. Another factor to consider is that, although you are concerned about the direction of your shots because of the possible danger to your family and neighbors, the intruder doesn't give a damn. In that case it is best to put him down as soon as possible and sort it all out later. If you decide to shoot before you know if he's armed, it's a comforting thought to know that you have a throwaway to plant on him. There may be several intruders, in which case you should certainly open fire. The only question is the right moment. It should be when they are all vulnerable but before they can easily get to you. In other words, don't wait until they are all in the house before opening fire. The best advice to follow is: "When in doubt — shoot it out!"

If you decide to let the intruder surrender tell him to freeze when he is still some distance away from you. Don't do anything foolish such as sticking your gun in his ribs. He might grapple with you for it. Keep in mind that, by calling out to him, you are revealing your position, which could be very unhealthy for you.

If there are several intruders and a firefight develops the danger to your family will be acute. Ideally, your wife should

have a weapon and know how to use it. At the very least she may be able to hold off the intruders until the neighbors, if there are any, have called the police, if she has not been able to do so herself. If you live in New York City, you're out of luck. Everybody minds his own business there.

It may happen that the intruders will try to get in several ways. If you are being "Helter-Skeltered" you can expect this. Then it will be a matter of both of you taking up defensive positions and shooting it out. If there are two of you with guns your chances of survival, even in a bad situation, are greatly enhanced. You can watch each other's back. You can catch the intruders in a crossfire. You can take turns firing and reloading. Working together pays off best when you have planned and rehearsed together.

Finally, lock up your guns when you go out. This seems like trivial advice but it is a fact that the risk of burglary is far greater than the risk of intrusion. Make it as difficult for the burglar as you can. If you come home to find that someone has broken into your home, remember that he may still be inside. Don't go in after him. Cover the exits and wait for him to come out. Call the police. If you are the police call for a backup unit.

29. Home Defense In Riots And Civil War

This is basically a short chapter on the military defense of your home. It is an almost hopeless task because in the military sense your home is just another piece of terrain which can be traded for lives or for time, however much it means to you.

The first fact to keep in mind is that you cannot withstand a full-scale military assault. A squad of infantry will overrun you in just a few minutes, unless you have another squad to back you up. Even then your home is not a pillbox and a mortar shell or a quick hosing down with a flamethrower will overcome any defense you can put up.

What is realistic is that you can defend your home from a party of looters or rioters for a short time, and perhaps persuade them to seek an easier target. If you live in an apartment your chances are very poor unless you can team up with other tenants for the defense of the building as a whole. Then you will be in a very good position indeed.

If you live in a house you will be somewhat better off. The most important factor will be the absence of blind spots. A house on its own plot of land, unconnected with neighboring houses and with windows on every side is the best arrangement. If you live in a row house, or a town house, or a detached house with one or more blank walls, you have a blind spot through which a potential enemy might come without your being aware of his approach. The first knowledge you would have of the danger would be when shots would come in through a window, or perhaps a gasoline bomb. If you live in such a place you should be prepared to move out in case of danger. If you are determined to stay there you could have a small window or two put in to elimi-

nate the problem. If you live in adjoining houses your only chance is to team up with your neighbors.

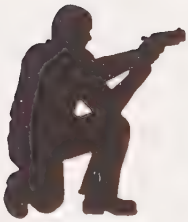
Planning the military defense of your house involves first assessing your property for fields of fire and any cover an attacker might take. There might be a huge tree blocking your view and behind which an attacker might take cover. Survey this and determine if the back of the tree is vulnerable to crossfire from a window in your house or a neighbor's. Plan for clearing bushes and fences that block your field of fire. Tearing up the lawn is a serious measure but being caught in the middle of a riot or a civil war is just as serious. Anyway, if the situation is that bad your neatly manicured lawn might be trampled by a mob anyway.

Fortifying your house takes some time. It is a lot of work. It means making sandbags and piling them inside the walls and near the windows to protect against bullets. If you have access to the roof from inside the house you might pile a few sandbags there to create a fortified position from which you could fire at attackers behind cover which protects them from ground-level fire. Sandbags can be improvised from plastic garbage bags, and the little bags you get in supermarkets for your vegetables. They are not as good as burlap but they are there when you need them and they are easy to store. Fill them up with dirt and you have a good start. As a rough guide you need at least twenty inches of dirt or nine inches of dry sand to protect you from .30 caliber rifle fire. The thickness of the walls in your house will give you a margin of safety, particularly if they are masonry.

If you are about to come under attack knock out all the glass in the windows. Flying glass can be very uncomfortable.

Very early, perhaps even before the attack, you will have to decide whether to fight or to run. You should have a line of retreat prepared for this eventuality. Sometimes, as if you see that you are going to be hopelessly outnumbered, it is best to run. At least get the wife and kids out of there while you cover their retreat. If you decide to retreat, it should be obvious that you must make your move before you are surrounded. Once you are encircled, there is little hope for a getaway and if the shooting starts you can expect only the

worst. The attackers may not be in a mood to take prisoners. In fact, if you are both surrounded and outnumbered, it might be best to surrender right at the outset before a shot is fired. This is a distasteful prospect for all of us macho guys but if we can't shoot it out and we have neglected to retreat it may be the only thing to do.



30. Robbery And Burglary Calls

"Robbery in progress" or "Burglary in progress" calls are among the most distasteful calls the police have to answer, apart from possibly family fights. The big danger in burglary calls is that they are usually silent alarms. Most of the time the alert is due to a malfunction in the equipment. This can make you complacent. On the other hand, in robbery calls, you may be over-eager and that's dangerous too.

Always remember: don't be in a hurry to go into a building. Learn patience. If it is a robbery call, take cover behind your car or something more substantial and wait for the robber to come out. There probably will be fewer people on the street and less chance of injuring innocents if the shooting starts. The danger to innocent people is not so much from your gunfire but from the robber's. He is less concerned about innocent lives than you are.

Waiting for him to come out gives you another advantage even if the area is crowded. You can patiently wait for him behind cover and use a support for aiming your weapon. You have the time to train your gun on the exit and wait for him. You might even have time to get out a shotgun or a carbine. Even with a pistol you will be capable of great accuracy in these circumstances. You can nail him when he comes out, without warning, thereby eliminating the danger to innocent people. If your department requires a verbal warning before opening fire you have lost some, but not all, of your advantage, particularly if you shoot before he has time to react. You can always testify later than he made a threatening move and hope that bystanders will not contradict you.

In a burglary call, also wait. Scan the premises for signs of forced entry before you even decide whether to go in or not. Peer carefully through any windows to try to detect any movement inside. If you have made a silent approach and have parked your car out of sight of the premises, the burglar, if there is one, will have no inkling that you are there.

If you see no signs of forced entry, or if you have reason to believe that the burglar has already left, you might try to search the premises using the greatest care. This means using cover to the maximum and looking around corners with mirrors before exposing yourself.

If you detect a suspect inside the premises, don't go in. Treat him as a barricaded suspect.

31. Working With A Partner

In some fortunate situations you'll be working with a partner in whom you have confidence and whose judgment you trust. This gives you an immeasurable advantage over working alone. Your fighting power, according to Lanchester's law, is squared, not merely doubled. You have the advantages of both fire and maneuver and, with good teamwork, you should be able to plan and put into practice moves that you will have worked out beforehand.

It is important to have a partner whom you like and with whom you are intellectually and emotionally compatible. As your relationship develops you will learn each other's way of thinking and be able to predict each other's probable reaction in a given situation. Good teamwork requires planning for various eventualities, and if you are really interested in being well-coordinated, rehearsing the various plans that you draw up. You will find, during these rehearsals, that working with a partner in life and death situations brings a special responsibility. You will learn to literally look out for each other.

Planning is important. While it is impossible to plan what you will do in every conceivable set of circumstances, it is nevertheless possible to plan not only general guidelines for action but certain set responses for various critical situations. While it is true that some situations will take you by surprise, if you have certain "building blocks" of tactics you can improvise the rest on the spot. Some guidelines are:

Try to split up, spread out, and outflank the enemy. Catch him or them in a crossfire if you can.

Stay out of each other's line of fire. Conversely, try to maneuver so that your opponent does not push one of you into the other's line of fire. Moreover, try to maneuver so

that one of your adversaries is blocking the other's line of fire.

While splitting up forces your adversary to divide his attention, don't split up so far that you lose contact with each other unless you are carrying out a previously agreed-upon plan.

Use the basic infantry tactics of fire and maneuver. One of you gives covering fire to force your enemy to keep his head down while the other changes his position. This is very important. Maneuvering is as important as firepower. You may want to outflank the enemy, or go to get another weapon, go to get help, etc.

Plan certain things in advance. For example, each of the partners should, when opening fire, direct his fire to the adversary or adversaries on his side first. If there are three of them and two of you, and you are on your partner's right, you should open fire on the right-hand one first, then the center one, and finally the left-hand one if your partner has not yet taken him out.

If you are riding in a vehicle and the plan is, if ambushed, to bail out of the vehicle and counterattack, preplan the exit sequence. It won't do to be colliding in the doorway while the ambushers are pouring it in on you. Decide in advance who will cover which side so that there is no confusion when you get outside.

If you are in a house or in a room, decide in advance which side you will each defend.

Be aware, during the firefight, of your partner's status. If you are firing upon several opponents, you may find that your partner has ceased firing because of a jam, or being out of ammo, or some other reason. You must be prepared to take up the slack. If your partner cannot take out the targets on his side you must be prepared to do it for him after you've finished off yours. You must both learn to anticipate each other's moves. For example, you might be aware that your partner's cover is not as good as yours. In that case you should lay down some covering fire to give him a chance to change his position. Reciprocally, he should be prepared to do the same for you.

Try, during your rehearsals together, to develop an awareness of each other's cadence and timing. You should know how long the other takes to reload, how fast the other can run from point A to point B, etc. Timing is all-important in a shootout and synchronizing with a partner often makes the difference between life and death.

You should try for a commonality of weapons. This does not mean that you should both carry identical guns but that they should be the same caliber and type. For example, you might both agree to carry Smith & Wesson 9mm automatics and twelve-gauge pump-action shotguns. This simplifies the ammunition supply problem. It would be extremely awkward if, during a firefight, one of you ran back to the car under fire to get another box of twelve-gauge slugs and found out, upon returning to his position of cover, that he was holding a box of sixteens.

Be familiar with the other's weapon or weapons. The guns may use the same ammunition but be of different models or makes. In certain circumstances, such as one being wounded, it may be important for the other to be able to use the wounded one's weapon, particularly if his own is jammed or otherwise unserviceable.

Since we are a motorized society, a lot of our time is spent in and around cars. If you are working with a partner in a vehicle you should have your planning worked out to even seemingly minor details as who carries what weapons when. The driver obviously cannot drive while holding a shotgun. Whoever is beside him will obviously be the one to "ride shotgun". Does that mean that the driver should have only a pistol or should he keep a shotgun under the seat or in the back? If you have to bail out, should the driver stop the vehicle and both of you bail out, or should he slow down to let the shotgunner off and then proceed a few more yards before bailing out himself? How much ammo do you carry on you and how much reserve ammo do you carry in the vehicle? These are some of the questions that must be answered before you will be a well-integrated team.

One of the quickest ways to work out some of your basic tactics is to run through some scenarios together to see how

well your basic plans stand up in action. Then, when you have worked out most the bugs, practice. Practice some more. Then go on to more difficult problems. Be realistic. Recognize that there will be some problems that you cannot handle. There is too such a word as impossible. That way you will learn your strong points and your limitations as a team.

32. Handling Hostage Situations

These are the most frightening situations to face, not only because of the danger to innocent people as well as to the police officers, but because the tactical, psychological, and moral problems can be excruciatingly difficult.

Hostage situations can be individual or collective, and the dividing line between the two can be very hazy. Nevertheless, I will deal with each type separately.

There are basically two theories regarding the handling of hostage situations — the hard line and the soft line, and it is very difficult to differentiate between the two in practice.

In theory, the soft line puts the safety of the hostages first. The criminal is to be given anything within reason to ensure the safety of the hostages and their eventual release.

The hard line theory states that whatever the outcome, the criminal is not to be allowed to get away. This is because he yet might take more hostages later and it would also serve as encouragement to other criminals or terrorists to take hostages as a means of enforcing their demands.

Most police forces and governments, while paying lip service to the soft line, actually are adherents of the hard line. The press officer assures the media that "every effort is being made to ensure the safety of the hostages". This is because every government except the most totalitarian has to worry about public relations, as do the police forces.

Additionally, no police force, in writing its manual of procedure, can afford to ignore the fact that anything put in writing might lead to a lawsuit by relatives of hostages killed during such incidents. Therefore the policy manual will be vague and misleading, or will skirt the subject altogether while the actual policy is handed down by word of mouth.

The New York Police Department's manual is an example of the "soft" line, while the Los Angeles Police Department manual on S.W.A.T. teams is an example of the vague type.

An example of the individual type of hostage situation is when a police officer walks into a stickup where the stickup man takes a human shield and tells the officer to drop his gun. An auto stop that developed into a hostage situation occurred in the "Onion Field" incident in California, in which the shield was the officer's partner. Trying to decide whether to refuse or to comply with the demand can be an agonizing choice, involving not only tactical considerations but the officer's own feelings of "machismo".

An even worse example is that of the householder facing an intruder who has taken a member of the family hostage.

Such a situation is by its very nature informal and the only person who can make the decision is the person on the spot. If you are a police officer, you can be sure that, whatever the department's policy is, the person who formulated it was never in such a situation himself.

In such a confrontation, the decision should be made on the basis of facts, not feelings. Some of the facts are:

1) The suspect's main interest is in getting away, not killing; otherwise he would have already fired.

2) "Beating the Drop"; drawing and firing against someone who is holding a gun on you, is extremely hard to do.

3) If you are wounded your chances of survival are about 80%, if a raw statistic is any encouragement. You still might be maimed, however.

4) If you elect to shoot it out your chances of taking him with you if you are killed are excellent.

5) Most hostages are eventually released unharmed, anyway. Some judgments which you will have to make on the spot are these:

a) Is the suspect a hardened criminal, likely to kill someone else if you let him go?

b) Is he a psychopath, likely to kill anyway? This may not be a rational action, given point 1) above, but there are some crazy people out there.

c) Is he likely to kill this particular hostage? Why?
d) Will he release the hostage afterwards, unharmed?

Whatever you decide to do, you will have to make up your mind very quickly, and you will be liable to any amount of "Monday morning quarterbacking" by people who were not there.

The collective type of hostage incident usually involves a group of criminals or terrorists who take hostages in a public building, train, or aircraft, where they are surrounded by cordons of police or troops. The situation often lasts for many days and usually involves some sort of demands and negotiations between the criminals and the authorities.

The two main problems are capturing the criminals and saving the hostages. The usual police response is to procrastinate endlessly, beyond the time needed to deploy a sniper team, or to ready an assault force. Actually, the best approach to the problem is one that combines speed and surprise, without being hasty or premature. Therefore, it is important to avoid the two main mistakes of handling a hostage situation:

1) Procrastinating because you can't make up your mind as to what to do. This often happens, with public relations officers making empty promises to the media, while everybody stands around wondering what will happen next. If you do this you surrender all of the initiative to the terrorists.

2) A hasty, ill-prepared attack that is bungled because of poor preparation and winds up with the hostages being killed or the terrorists escaping, or both. Sometimes the attack is so incompetently prepared that it doesn't even get off the ground and the situation is as before, or worse.

A careful study of the hostage situations in recent years will show what can be done and what can go wrong. A short list of actions that are instructive is:

a) *Attica.* Inmates holding guards hostage. State Police storm the yard, killing more hostages than the prisoners did.

b) *Entebbe.* Israeli paratroopers recover hostages from a site 2,500 miles from their home base. Almost no casualties among the hostages. Usually considered a classis rescue operation.

c) *Mogadishu.* German Border Guard unit rescues hostages held aboard an airliner. Complete success, facilitated by cooperation of local authorities. No hostage casualties.

d) *Nicosia.* Egyptian commandos try to rescue hostages against the armed opposition of the local authorities. They are fired upon by airport troops and fail completely.

e) *Iran.* American unit fails to rescue hostages when helicopters fail. Mission abandoned. Collision between two taxiing aircraft kills eight members of rescue mission.

f) *Iranian Embassy, London.* Special Air Service Commandos storm embassy and rescue hostages after six days of negotiations. Complete success.

Several other operations, (Hammelburg, Vietnam, and Mayaguez) are not discussed here because they were strictly military operations that took place in wartime and did not involve any negotiations.

The basic steps in handling a hostage crisis are:

A) Surround the area. Establish a perimeter and keep out unauthorized people. When the press arrive, as they inevitably will, confine them to a specific area out of sight of the action. Keep the area sealed off, as it is even possible that accomplices of the criminals might try to gain access disguised as bystanders. Cut all communications between the terrorists and the outside world, if possible.

B) Keep the building, train, or aircraft under observation at all times. Explore the possibility of planting a listening device or a miniaturized TV camera to observe the interior.

C) Try to decide immediately upon your approach to the situation. Will you try psychological techniques or will you use talk just to set the stage for an attack? There is much to be said for each approach and each has been used with success.

D) Remember that any promises that you make to the terrorists are not binding either morally or legally. They are extorted promises and you should not hesitate to go back on them. Promise them anything . . .

E) Use delaying tactics to gain time for you to set up your preparations. Tell them that you must consult your superiors, etc.

F) Keep an assault force on constant stand-by. If the terrorists start killing hostages, for example, you might decide to go ahead with the assault as the lesser of two evils.

G) Control the media. Do not let their representatives wander freely through the area, reporting what they see. The terrorists may have access to a radio or TV set, too.

H) Get plans of the building or aircraft involved. Study them and develop an assault plan for your troops to use. "Troops" may be military or a special police unit, depending on the circumstances and what is available. Have the troops rehearse the assault on a duplicate of the aircraft or a mockup of the building. This is particularly important if your troops are a scratch force, i.e., sheriff's deputies, city police, etc. If, on the other hand, you have a specially trained anti-terrorist unit available they are probably already trained on various types of aircraft and have contingency plans for hostage situations involving buildings, etc. Still, a rehearsal is valuable.

I) Your initial aim in any negotiation is to obtain the release of one or more hostages as quickly as possible. You may offer to trade food, fuel, cigarettes, etc. for them.

This has two purposes: to reduce the number of lives in danger and, more importantly, to get you some hard information as to the situation inside. Some of the information that released hostages can provide, if they are questioned properly, is:

The number of terrorists, their descriptions, identities, weapons, clothing, etc.

The locations of both the terrorists and the hostages. Are they scattered? Are they segregated? This is important to know when planning the assault.

Who is their leader?

Do they have a bomb? If so, where is it and who controls it?

Have the terrorists disclosed their plans at all to the hostages? Have they said anything significant that can be used in planning an assault?

The mental and physical state of the terrorists. Are they reasonable? Frightened? Psychotic?

Isolate the released hostages from the press. Warn them that anything that they disclose to the media might endanger the hostages still held captive.

J) Try to get as much information from other sources and combine this with the information gleaned from the released hostages. Get information that will be useful in briefing the assault force — photographs of the terrorists, if their identities are known and they have criminal records.

K) While you are getting ready, don't try anything stupid, such as sending out troops or police disguised as air or ground crew, ambulance drivers, etc. The terrorists should be assumed to be aware of this ploy and will be watching very closely anyone who approaches.

L) If you decide to use negotiation as your main method you should note that in most instances the longer the captivity lasts the less likely the terrorists are to kill the hostages. A psychological bond develops under the stress of the situation and this tends to inhibit violence. This works both ways. Hostages are less likely to make use of any opportunity to overthrow their captors or to gain their freedom. This phenomenon has been named the "Stockholm Syndrome" after the city where a conspicuous instance of it happened.

The negotiator should, according to one point of view, be mature and have an air of authority. Another point of view is that he should match the terrorists in age and appearance. Take your choice.

At this point it should be noted that the professional criminal is likely to be the most rational and realistic, the one with the best feel for what is or is not possible. The psychotic and the political terrorists are less likely to be reasonable.

There are exceptions, of course. There are many professional criminals who are borderline cases.

The political type is likely to be the hardest to deal with; the most willing to die for his cause. Time and fatigue may weaken his resolve.

You will want to keep the terrorist talking, partly to get as much information as possible about him, partly to establish a rapport with him, and partly to keep him awake in order to tire him out. This is a standard technique when dealing with hostage situations — tiring the terrorist out so that he will be less alert when the assault comes.

M) The purpose of the assault is to rescue the hostages while apprehending the suspects. The timing is critical. The assault should not be mounted before the troops can be thoroughly briefed, and not too late to rescue the hostages. If the terrorists start to kill hostages that is the time to attack. Usually there are several days' slack.

The assault force should be briefed as to the number of hostages and their location. They should be told the number of captors, their descriptions and, if possible, shown photographs. This is essential because the troops will have to know who is friendly and who is hostile once they go in. If the terrorists are wearing any sort of common dress, such as a uniform, or black pajamas, recognition will be made easier.

The basic tactic will be to burst in suddenly and shoot the captors. The assault must be sudden and the assault troops must be very aggressive, press the offensive, and not give the captors time to think or to kill the hostages. The troops must expose themselves to draw the terrorists' attention and fire, so that they will not shoot hostages. For this reason the assault troops must be very brave men and they must also be equipped with body armor.

Smoke and tear gas are useless. They do not protect the hostages and will only impede progress of the assault force. Stun grenades are somewhat over-rated. They are useful but the main thing is aggressive tactics. Besides, the much-publicised stun grenades may not be available when you need them. You might try to improvise with conventional explosives, if you know what you're doing.

Do not be afraid to employ firepower during the attack. Carefully directed fire can save lives. For example, a shotgun blast that kills a terrorist armed with a submachine gun and also kills one hostage is better in the long run than a delayed shot that kills only the terrorist after he has slaughtered a dozen victims.

There is invariably a risk to the innocent. No weapon is selective enough to kill only the bad guys while remaining harmless to the good guys. It is always a calculated risk.

Heavy casualties must be anticipated. The Israeli raid at Entebbe suggested that this sort of operation can be carried out with little loss of innocent life. It is easy to forget that the Israelis sent along a Boeing 707 fitted out as a flying hospital. They expected far heavier casualties than they actually sustained. They lucked out and in the afterglow of their success the operation looked more brilliant and less risky than it actually was.

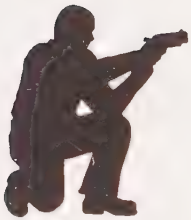
N) Try to keep the terrorists talking, particularly just before the assault. That way you heighten the surprise and also pin-point where they are, if you know where the radio or telephone is located.

O) Consider taking out the terrorists by long-range sniper fire instead of a full-scale assault, if possible. This may be feasible if there are few of them and they are all visible at the same time. If there are more than two or three captors it is probably hopeless. If there are only one or two it might work. Try for a moment when they are not pointing their guns at the hostages and try for brain or spine shots. It is important that their guns be pointed elsewhere than at the hostages, as even with an instant kill they might still pull the triggers by reflex as they die.

P) Don't waste your time and effort on trying various "non-lethal" weapons such as tear gas or even the more exotic ones such as BZ, if they are available to you. They do not protect the hostages because no gas can be instantly incapacitating.

Q) After the operation is over warn the rescued hostages not to talk to the press. Disclosure of specific details of the operation could be useful to future hostage-takers. For

example, they would be reluctant to release any hostages at all if they were made aware that those released could provide important information to the anti-terrorist force.



33. Taking And Using Hostages

In certain circumstances you might be justified in taking hostages for use against the enemy. While this might sound bizarre at first, a brief recital of some possibilities will make it convincing:

a) You are an off-duty policeman who is in a store when two stickup men come in. One of them is only a couple of feet away from you. They are engrossed in terrifying the shopkeeper and are paying little attention to you, the only customer in the place. Above all, they don't know you're a police officer.

b) You are an undercover agent who has just been blown. You are in a room with one of the suspects next to you and the rest of your would-be exterminators some feet away.

c) You are a householder who has just surprised three intruders. They are armed. One of them is very close to you, within touching distance, in fact.

d) You are a resistance fighter surrounded by the modern day equivalent of the Gestapo while you hold the Kommandant of the occupation troops at gunpoint.

If you come into a situation in which you must take a hostage, here are a few guidelines to follow:

1) The first step is seizing and controlling a hostage. Pick the one nearest to you, or the one who seems physically weakest or psychologically susceptible enough for you to intimidate and control with a minimum of effort.

2) Use him or her as a human shield, keeping your head down. At the first sign of resistance, club your hostage with

your pistol. In fact, if the hostage seems particularly feisty, you might want to give him or her a couple of precautionary thumps to ensure cooperation.

3) If the proceedings are still in the talking stage, keep your pistol pressed against your hostage's head, not pointed at your other opponents, and make it clear that if they make any trouble the hostage gets it first.

4) Where possible take two or more hostages if you are in a position to control them. This permits you to kill one of them to show that you mean business and yet have a bargaining counter in reserve.

5) Delay is your worst enemy. Therefore don't make any demands that will take a long time to meet (large amounts of money in small bills, an airplane gassed up and waiting at the airport, etc.) and allow no delay or procrastination on the part of the enemy. Usually all you'll need is their immediate surrender or at least their passivity while you get away. Take whatever you can.

6) Once the shooting starts, feel free to blast away at your adversaries. Don't waste any bullets killing the hostage. The stray shots directed at you will do that. Just make the most of your hostage as a human shield.

7) Don't stay in one place more than a few minutes. Commandeer a car and get going. If you delay you just allow the enemy to complete your encirclement and to deploy sniper teams. If you're still there when the television crews roll up you'd better just surrender — it's hopeless!

34. Shootout In The Sky

It is just as well that the epidemic of skyjackings has abated in recent years, because a gunfight aboard an aircraft is very dangerous. It is comparable to a shootout in an explosives plant. The plane itself is very vulnerable to gunfire and because of the extreme crowding aboard an airliner there is almost a guarantee that innocent people will be killed.

The emphasis today is on airport security and on screening the passengers before they board. It is better to have the confrontation in the terminal than in the sky. A shootout in a crowded terminal is bad enough but it is better than doing it eight miles up.

Those who know best, the pilots themselves, refuse to be armed. They recognize the dangers involved and maintain that the best place to handle the problem is on the ground.

One reason for the almost total abandoning of the "sky marshall" program in recent years is that the sky marshalls needed the pilots' permission to take action. The pilots, understandably, were reluctant to risk the safety of the aircraft and the passengers.

With all that, and despite the massive efforts made to cope with the problem, a skyjacking still happens from time to time. Then the choice is between two alternatives: surrender or resistance.

Surrender and compliance with the skyjacker's demands is by far the safest course. There has never yet been a case of the passengers' being slaughtered wholesale. The skyjackers are out to get to their destination or to make a political point and gain sympathy for their cause: killing innocent people would be counter-productive. At times the planes themselves have been blown up, but the passengers and crew have been

evacuated first. In any event, wherever in the world the plane winds up, there is an increasing likelihood of rescue by commandos.

Resistance is an almost impossible task at times. The skyjacker may not simply be a man with a gun. He might have a bomb with him, and killing him before he can detonate it may well be impossible. The bomb may have a "dead man's switch", a device which detonates it if he releases pressure on it. That makes it even more difficult, for even grappling with him will blow you all up. The worst case is that he has secreted a bomb on board which will go off unless he deactivates it. Then there is nothing at all you can do as a countermeasure.

If the choice is resistance, there will probably be armed secutity guards travelling incognito among the passengers. There should be at least four and they should be armed with weapons suitable for that situation. Rumor has it that Israeli security guards carry .22 caliber pistols using reduced loads that will not penetrate the skin of the aircraft. In the United States, ammunition known as "Short Stop" was popular for a while. This is a small "beanbag" loaded into a .38 Special case. It slows down rapidly after coming out of the barrel, is supposedly lethal at point-blank range, but allegedly does not travel on with enough force to penetrate the skin of the aircraft.

The fatal flaw in this approach is that the skyjacker is not likely to be so considerate as to use this "safe" ammunition. Quite the contrary — he's likely to have a carbine or a bomb. The problem with low-powered ammunition, as allegedly carried by the Israeli agents, is that less power means less lethality too. The power of the weapons is so low that their effectiveness is questionable.

Considering all this, it is essential that the security guards have well-rehearsed plans to regain control of the aircraft in various circumstances. Communication will be a problem so each person must know what to do before it happens. Speed and surprise are most important. Ideally, all attackers should be neutralized simultaneously by the guards closest to them. Weapons should be used as close-up as possible to reduce the

risk of missing. In such a situation, with everybody within touching distance, there is ample opportunity to use weapons other than firearms. A blackjack, properly used, can put down a skyjacker with no risk to the aircraft.

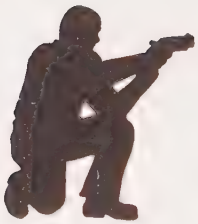
One of the skyjackers may have a grenade with the pin pulled in his hand. That increases the difficulties immensely. There may be, if the skyjackers are sophisticated, several members of their group among the passengers who have not yet revealed themselves, as a reserve against counterstrokes.

The Israelis follow the hardest line of all. After one of their aircraft was taken to Algeria a decade ago, the negotiations that followed were so difficult that they have adopted a policy of refusing to let any of El-Al's airplanes be seized and flown to a hostile country, even if it means the destruction of the plane and the passengers. Probably the pilots have secret orders to crash the plane if the security guards are overwhelmed. This way of thinking can only be described as alien. However, it seems to work as a deterrent. No Israeli aircraft has been taken to Damascus lately.

Any party planning to take over an aircraft should have three components: a first force to seize the plane, a reserve force to remain incognito until the security people make their move, and a spare flight crew. The airliner's crew should be neutralized as soon as possible to avoid any tricks and their places taken by the spare crew.

Recapturing an aircraft is an art in itself. Basically, it takes a platoon of commandos acting with speed and surprise. Surrounding the plane with snipers doesn't work, as was demonstrated at Kennedy airport in 1969. Sending out soldiers or police disguised as ground crew or flight crew is stupid.

The example to follow is the performance of the German GSG-9 troops in Somalia. Their action shows the advantage of making a sudden forcible entry into the plane and overwhelming the skyjackers in a rush. Not one passenger was killed in the action. The usual formula of "Time, Talk, and Tactics" is unproductive here because it throws away the advantages of speed and surprise.



35. Covering And Searching Your Suspects

If you have the drop on your opponent, never say "Hands up". Then you expect him to move. He will move but if it is the wrong move for you it will cost you a fraction of a second or more before you sort it out and you will be caught at a disadvantage. Instead, say "Don't move" or "Freeze".

Watch his hands, rather than his eyes. He may seek to misdirect your attention by looking over your shoulder while his hand is going for a weapon. This is an old trick but it sometimes works. Keep your eyes on his hands.

Be alert to the possibility that he may try to disarm you. The best precaution that you can take is to avoid getting within his reach. He may be a judo expert or a desperate fool.

There are a number of ruses that your opponent may use to get you within reach. He may fake a heart attack. This is a cheap shot, but he may think up something more original. Don't let him get you within touching distance.

When covering more than one adversary, don't let them fan out in a line across your field of view, so that you have to swing the gun in a wide arc to keep them all covered. This will increase your response time if trouble starts. It will also offer them the opportunity to rush you from several different directions at the same time. Instead, keep them in a line in front of you. Have them stand with their hands clasped at the backs of their heads facing away from you in single file. That way each one in the line can't see what the man in back of him is doing. Stand off slightly to the side, only enough so that you can see all of them. Allow no talking between them. Be prepared to shoot in cold blood to show that you mean business.

Another advantage of the in-line position is that if they decide to try to rush you they can only get to you one at a time.

If you must frisk them be alert to the fact that you will be in the greatest danger when you are within touching distance. The conventional method of frisking, with the suspects braced against a wall or car with his legs spread, is not very safe for you, as some criminals have been practicing jumping back from such a position and disarming the person frisking them.

It is safer for you if you have the suspect lie prone, with his ankles crossed and his hands behind his head with the fingers laced together. This puts him in the most awkward position for initiating an attack. As an additional precaution you might keep your foot in the middle of his back as you search him. If there is more than one person to be searched do this to the last one in line and then send him to the front of the line when you are finished with him. Repeat the process with the next one. That way you avoid having potentially dangerous suspects on either side of you, within touching distance, as you would with an "against the wall" search.

Don't try to handcuff your suspect yourself. There is no 100% safe way to do this if you get within arm's length. Back off a few steps, throw him your handcuffs, and tell him to put them on. If the situation calls for immobilizing him tell him to handcuff himself to a pipe or a fence.

The best way to frisk without danger is to have the suspect face away from you. Keep him covered and change your position after he turns his back. Get behind cover if available. This is a precaution in case he comes up with a weapon. He won't find you where he expects you if he turns on you. When you are in position, tell him to undress down to the bare skin. Don't let him deter or fake you out with any remarks about being "queer". A lot of street-wise suspects will try that. Just tell him to shut up and strip, or else.

If you are a policeman and in a public place, you will not be able to do this. It is an unorthodox procedure by the rules of any department. If you are military or a civilian, the rules don't apply to you. The only rule is survival.

36. The Bodyguard

Sometimes one is called upon to do a job that is the opposite of a shootout, although it may involve some gunplay. A bodyguard seeks to avoid shooting incidents, if possible. If one occurs he has failed at half his job.

Being a bodyguard probably requires more moment-to-moment alertness than any other occupation. It is essentially a defensive process about which a book could be written. As in any defense, it involves defense in depth. The basic principles can be laid out under three headings: Planning, Prevention, and Protection.

PLANNING

Decide with your client, right at the outset, the severity of the threat and try to plan how much protection he needs. Manpower needs will be largely determined by your client's lifestyle. If he does a lot of traveling and has several residences it will take a lot of men to do the job. If the threat is minimal and the budget is limited, two bodyguards for whenever he ventures out will probably do it. One bodyguard is never enough.

If the situation requires, you may have to plan on round the clock protection with several guards on each shift. Arrange with your client that he notify you of his daily schedule and get him to agree not to make any drastic changes or to go on any trips without discussing it with you first.

Plan how you will meet each threat and rehearse it as much as possible. If there is a crew of guards make sure that they work as a well-coordinated team and that every member knows his part and the overall picture too. Be prepared to

improvise but plan well enough so that you will not have to improvise much.

Plan the routes for any trips that your client may make. If possible, go over the route yourself beforehand to observe any danger spots. Do not hesitate to request changes if you see any excessive risks in the plan.

Pay particular attention to danger spots. Be prepared to avoid them or to neutralize them, whichever is appropriate. For example, if your client plans to travel by car in a built-up area, you may be worried about snipers. You can avoid the threat by changing the route or you can neutralize it by having your client travel in an armored vehicle, if available.

Plan for contingencies. Have escape routes laid out for both at home and on the road. Be prepared to hustle your client out of a danger area. Keep your plans up to date.

Know the environment enough to list sources of help and their location. Every police station and every hospital in the area should be in your memory or on an easily available list, along with the shortest routes to get there. If away from home, a safe haven away from the planned route should be selected. This will be a place to take your client if a severe threat develops. It should be a place that is easy to cordon off and defend.

Important equipment should be included in the planning. Weapons, ammunition supply, vehicles, first aid kits, etc., should all be in the plan. One guard on each shift should be a paramedic, or at least able to give first aid.

Details are important. Everyone concerned in the operation should know the client's blood type, any allergies and any other pertinent medical information, the address and telephone number of his doctor, etc. Any drugs the client regularly takes should be kept on hand and everyone should know where the supply is.

PREVENTION

While it may not seem so at first, shooting it out with an assassin is the poorest way to protect the client. It is far better to avoid the potential dangers or to neutralize them before they get to the shooting stage.

Prevention means avoiding situations which could be dangerous to your client. There are some which are particularly dangerous and should be avoided almost at all cost:

1) Isolated places with limited access and poor transportation. Anything can happen and if it does you are far from help.

2) Crowds. They offer much cover to an assassin because there is so much movement and confusion that it is difficult to spot a threat early. Also, if your client is a public figure, well known and disliked, the crowd may provide the setting for a mob. Sometimes appearing in front of a crowd is unavoidable if your client is a public figure. In such a case it is critically important to always have a means of extricating your client rapidly from the situation if a threat develops.

3) Ambush situations. Avoid places which lend themselves to ambushes as much as possible. If one is unavoidable, check it out before your client comes on the scene. If travelling by car, speed up if possible when passing through areas favorable for an ambush. Be prepared to change plans at the last minute to frustrate potential ambushes.

Controlling access to your client is an important part of prevention. There must be a buffer, both physical and human, between him and potential threats:

1) Have a certain amount of physical distance between your client and other people. There should also be a barrier, if possible, such as a wall, a doorway, a gate, a fence, or even a wall of bodies. This enables you to keep the threat at a distance.

2) Control access to your client. This is not quite the same thing. There are people who will have legitimate reason to be in your client's immediate proximity. Relatives, business contacts, and servants all have reason to be there. You should, however, screen visitors. Don't depend on a secretary or receptionist to do this. It is your responsibility to check people out to establish that they are whom they say they are, that they have legitimate business with your client, and that

they pose no threat to him. It is also important to be nearby whenever your client has visitors, as the unexpected may happen.

Secrecy is a powerful weapon in protecting your client. You should get your client's cooperation in restricting any information about his movements. Travel plans, hotel arrangements, etc. should be kept to a limited number of people and only on a need-to-know basis. Every bit of information released about your client is a potential tip-off to an assassin. Anyone who wishes to do your client harm will find it very hard to plan if he doesn't know where your client is going, when he is going, by what route, etc. This applies even to indirect threats. Your client probably has relatives scattered all over the country. Some of them have different surnames and would not even by identified as relatives unless the details appear in the media. That opens up a kidnapping threat. You can't guard them all, and kidnapping a relative for ransom or some other purpose happens often enough to be taken seriously.

PROTECTION

Ideally, two guards should be with the client at all times: one to confront the threat directly and one to extricate the client from the dangerous situation. A serious job of bodyguarding cannot be done with less than two guards. Some specific measures you can take are:

1) Persuade your client to wear bullet-resistant clothing whenever he goes out. A vest or jacket made of ballistic cloth will do a lot and it is easy to wear. Of course, your client's willingness will depend on the climate. If it is very hot a heavy garment can be very uncomfortable.

2) Interpose a barrier between your client and potential threats, even when on the move. Keep him surrounded by agents who are at least as tall as he is. Use fences, cars, buildings, to screen his from view.

3) Keep moving while out in the open, unless there is nobody around for hundreds of yards. A moving target is harder to hit. An exception might be made if he is on an estate or on a beach where access can be controlled. Then it might be quite safe to stand exposed for long periods of time.

4) Examine all rooms, cars, etc., before your client enters them. This means not only a check for hostile or unknown people but for bombs or other harmful devices. Examine, where possible, the approaches to and the positions overlooking any place that your client will be staying. You may be quite limited in your power to search premises, but at least you should be aware of avenues of potential threat.

5) While on the alert for threats, decide beforehand whether or not you are willing to protect your client by placing your body between him and an attack. It is one thing to block someone with a knife and disarm him, and another to catch a bullet meant for your client. You may feel, with some justification, that it's only a job and that the sacrifice of your life is not worth it. If you feel this way, whether or not you make it clear to your client is up to your conscience.

In this connection, it is worthwhile for the bodyguards to wear ballistic vests. It should be a standard practice. A guard wearing protection may be more willing to step between his client and a threat. Presumably, the guards will be in better physical shape than the client and they should be able and willing to wear ballistic protection, even if the climate is hot and uncomfortable. They are being paid to do a job and their comfort is secondary.

WHAT TO DO WHEN THE SHIP HITS THE SAND

If you come under fire, protecting your client comes first. Attempting to apprehend the attacker is not your job, and no attempt to do so should be made except in the direct line of protecting your client. Knocking down, grappling with, or shooting an attacker is allowable, if it breaks up the attack. Diverting manpower to pursuing him if he is trying to escape is not.

You may choose to push your client to the ground or under cover, or you may interpose your body between him and the threat. If you decide to put yourself between your client and an attacker, you should at least be wearing a bullet-resistant vest and you should be prepared to shoot from the standing position, which might be wrong under other circumstances.

In shooting back, the object is not so much to overwhelm the attacker as it is to make him keep his head down until you can get your client out of danger. This is the point that will require you to exercise fine judgment on the spur of the moment.

If you are alone, it is difficult. If you have a crew the responsibilities can be divided up and assigned. One guard will always be at your client's side. His duty will be to shield the client or to get him under cover, or at least down out of the line of fire. He may have to trip the client to get him down quickly enough, and then jump on top of him to shield him. One useful measure is to carry a blanket of ballistic cloth to throw over the client as additional protection. In some circumstances, a portable shield made out of fiberglass or Lexan may be practical. Whatever the technicalities, the first guard's duty will be to stay with the client at all times and to protect him directly, though passively.

The others should form a loose ring around the client to block access to him. They prevent unauthorized people from approaching the client and in effect form a barrier that the assassin must overcome to get to his target. If there is an attack, they can return the fire. At least one of them, however, must arrange the transportation for evacuating the client. Another can go for help, if needed. The others can provide covering fire for these activities.

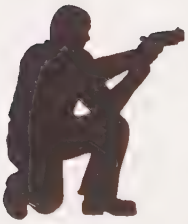
Remember that protecting and evacuating the client takes priority over killing or apprehending the assailant. Sometimes they may seem one and the same: remove the assailant and you remove the threat. This may not always be true. Never make the comfortable assumption that the assailant that you've just neutralized was the only one. Another bullet may come whizzing by just as you're dusting yourselves off.

To evacuate the client, run, do not walk, to the car if that is the method you choose. Surround the client as you go. Drive off as fast as possible and go by the quickest route to the safe haven that you've previously selected. If the client is wounded, you should know where the nearest source of medical help is located and you should go there. In the last extreme a police station should be a relatively safe place to take your client.

Upon arrival, the guards must surround the client and the group should run into the building to minimize exposure time.

It is hard to generalize and plan for every possibility in advance but some thought should be given to the prospect of a large number of attackers making a determined assault upon your client for the purpose of killing or kidnapping him. In that case a maximum effort to evacuate the client must be made, and this may mean detailing one or more of the guards staying behind to cover the escape and to impede pursuit. This unenviable task must be assigned in advance.

Rehearsal of these moves is a great help in detecting flaws in the plans and in demonstrating to all of the members of the team what each one's role will be.



37. Ricochet Shooting

Some shooters recommend ricochet shooting as a technique which will be useful in certain situations. Two suggested situations are these:

You are taking cover behind a wall. Your adversary is partially exposed and shooting at you. You expose only your arm and shoot at the wall, hoping that the bullet will ricochet off the wall and go skidding into your adversary.

You are facing an adversary in very bad light. You can hardly see him. You fire low intentionally so that the ricochets will hit him.

Probably the people who suggest this method have never actually done it themselves. It doesn't quite work the way it reads.

It is helpful, whenever possible, to run tests to clarify a doubtful point. We ran tests to determine just what happens to shots which are supposed to ricochet. We fired bullets at a hard surface, cement, and at a soft surface, clay soil. We fired at various angles to test the effect of the angle of incidence. From the tests several general rules emerged:

1) Shots fired into clay soil penetrated into the soil at all angles in all calibers, except for shots from a short-barrelled .22 pistol fired at an angle of ten degrees. One of these ricocheted at the same angle and hit the target.

2) The higher the speed of the bullet, the more chance of it breaking up rather than ricocheting.

3) Hollow-point and soft-point bullets are not suitable for ricochets. They tend to break up.

4) Shots fired at a cement block tended to ricochet when fired at angles of incidence of up to thirty degrees. The best

ricochets came from shallower angles of incidence. Shots fired at ten degrees ricocheted into the target about sixty to seventy percent of the time. Shots fired at twenty degrees had about the same percentage of success but they bounced off at a shallower angle than they were fired. Only one third to one half of the shots fired at thirty degrees ricocheted. The rest tended to break up. Finally, none of those fired at forty-five degrees bounced off into the target. They all broke up. Whatever the angle, only solid bullets ricocheted at all.

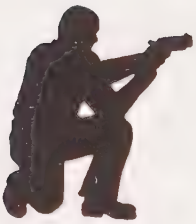
From these tests it is obvious that using ricochets to get a hit upon your opponent is an unreliable technique at best. The surface must be hard; the bullet must be solid and not the expanding type, the angle must be shallow, and the speed of the bullet must not be too high. Even then, it doesn't work all of the time.

38. If You Are Wounded

It may happen that you are hit. This is a grim prospect but you can console yourself with the fact that the odds are with you. Most gunshot wounds are not fatal. You may not even be disabled, so keep on shooting and continue the fight. Don't assume that the wound will be fatal even if you are hit in the torso. Your opponent's next hit might be, if you allow him to make it, so keep shooting.

Even if you've sustained a fatal wound you can take advantage of the "dead man's five seconds". Keep shooting. Make your last shot a good one. You may want to get him for revenge or to protect your family. No matter how much it hurts, don't willingly lay down and die. Keep shooting as long as you can.

If you are hit you can apply first aid to enable you to survive long enough to get help. In gunshot wounds the most important thing that you can do for yourself is to stop the bleeding and fight shock. Direct pressure on the wound is the most reliable and quickest way. There are other first-aid measures, such as mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, but you can't do that to yourself.



39. "Execution" Killing

You may be in a situation in which you have to kill someone in cold blood: you may be covering a suspect when a bullet from one of his buddies almost hits you. In that case the only rational thing to do is to quickly dispatch your suspect before turning to deal with his accomplice.

If you are in the military or one of the secret agencies of the government you might be assigned to a special unit where quick, informal executions are done. It's against the Geneva Convention but these things still do go on. In any event, the Geneva Convention does not cover internal security affairs or civil war, traditionally the most brutal of armed conflicts.

There are several schools of thought in "execution" killing. One method is to fire into the ear. This is not precise.

Another method is the old "bullet between the eyes" technique. Unless you have a very powerful cartridge which can destroy the entire brain by hydrostatic shock, the victim may not die, or at least not immediately. Also, the victim will see the muzzle of the gun in front of his face and may try to duck or engage in a desperate struggle with you for control of the gun.

The "Genickschuss", or neck-shot, made notorious by the Gestapo during World War II, involves severing the spinal cord by a bullet fired into the neck from the rear. This is better but not quite good enough.

The best method is to place the muzzle against the hollow at the back of the head and to fire slightly upward into the brain. The bullet will pass through the medulla oblongata (the part of the brain that controls heartbeat and respiration) and the rest of the brain, causing instant unconsciousness,

with death following in a few seconds. The hot powder gases exploding into the cranial cavity enhance the destructive effect.

One of the most spectacular photographs ever to appear in Life Magazine was that of a South Vietnamese police general executing a handcuffed suspect on a public street by shooting him in the temple with a short-barrelled revolver. This method does work most of the time but as the bullet does not pass through a vital area of the brain you depend on shock and hemorrhage to do the job. There are a number of cases on record of people surviving such a shot, sometimes for minutes, sometimes for years. One suicidal type shot himself in the temple with a .25 caliber pistol and was able to walk around for fifteen minutes before expiring. Another person shot himself with the result that he spent the rest of his life with a self-inflicted lobotomy. He did not try it again.

Related to "execution" killing is the "coup de grace". There will perhaps be situations in which you put your opponent down, the injury is not fatal, and you want to finish him off. This may come about for several reasons. Your opponent may have threatened to kill you, you fired in self-defense, and you feel that if he recovers he will try again. Or you might be the victim of a stick-up and fear that if the suspect recovers he will be out on bail before the trial comes up and will try to prevent you from testifying. Another possibility is that you are a policeman who knows that the suspect is a career criminal who is expert at taking advantage of the gaps in the criminal justice system and will be free again as soon as he is out of the hospital. Of course, administering curbstone justice is illegal. No police department can afford to condone or encourage it. Nevertheless, it is done by isolated policemen in certain extreme circumstances. Whether it is morally right or wrong is a matter for each individual to decide for himself.

In finishing off a wounded opponent you cannot just shoot him in the head, as an examination of the body will reveal that last shot and it will be difficult to explain it away. Often, such extreme measures are not necessary. If your adversary is gravely wounded merely delaying calling the

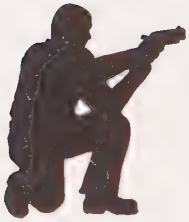
ambulance will assure that he will be D.O.A. If there are witnesses to the affray it may be difficult to do this, as the shooting will have been reported and an ambulance may already be on the way. Then you will have to undertake more active measures.

Quickly look over your victim and assess his injuries. If he is bleeding heavily avoid stanching the bleeding. If there is a spinal injury you can roll him over several times while "searching" him. This may not be fatal but he will not be committing many crimes if he is confined to a wheelchair the rest of his life. If there is a compound fracture, with the bullet having broken bones that are now protruding, moving him around will perhaps aggravate the bleeding. This is particularly true in a chest wound. A broken rib can be made to pierce a lung or an artery by judicious manipulation.

If the victim is semi-conscious, and if the witnesses are not close enough to see what you are doing, you could take his gun hand and turn it so as to fire a shot into his body. Your story would then be that he recovered enough to try to shoot you but that you deflected the gun muzzle.

Finally you might have to resort to mouth to mouth asphyxiation. While pretending to resuscitate him you pinch off his nose, place your mouth over his, but breathe through your nose. All you need is about four minutes of this and his brain will be starved of oxygen. At the very least he will be in a permanent coma, a vegetable, even if he does not die.

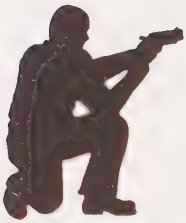
Another method, more subtle but very effective, is to pinch off the carotid arteries on the sides of the neck, thereby cutting off the supply of blood to the brain. If you are riding in the ambulance and are alone with the victim during the trip, you can inconspicuously slip a hand around his neck and apply the pressure. The most important point is to be sure not to press hard enough to leave marks which will be seen at the autopsy. Locating the carotid arteries in the neck is easy. Place your finger on his neck and feel for a pulse: that's where the artery is. There is one on each side. It is not essential to cut off all of the blood supply. Even slowing the flow for a few minutes can cause enough brain damage to maim him for life.



40. Save The Last One For Yourself

Suicide is an unpleasant prospect and at first sight seems to be an inappropriate subject to find in a book devoted to surviving a gunfight. Still, if you are a mercenary or if you live a dangerous lifestyle you may find yourself in certain extreme situations in which you may not want to be captured alive. If you hold certain sensitive information which you fear may be tortured out of you, or if the enemy maims and tortures his prisoners as a matter of routine you would probably prefer a quick and relatively clean death.

If you don't have one of those famed poison pills, the best way for you to go is by shooting. Don't let yourself run completely out of ammo. Insert the muzzle of the gun between your teeth and direct it at the roof of your mouth. Pull the trigger and you'll never know what hit you.



41. Concealing Weapons

Concealing weapons on your person is not very difficult. The use and availability of shoulder and hip holsters is such that one can carry a concealed weapon with style and elegance these days. In addition, there are pockets galore in twentieth century clothing to carry all sorts of weapons.

The size of the weapon depends heavily upon the climate. In the cooler climates people wear more and bulkier clothing, and therefore can carry more and bulkier weapons.

Concealing a weapon larger than a small submachinegun on the person can be problematic. In a climate cold enough to require an overcoat it is possible to carry a carbine or a shotgun on a sling under the coat. Overcoats are not in style these days and raincoats are cut knee-length so another solution will have to do for most of us.

Carrying it in the hand wrapped in brown paper is the next step up. The shape can be disguised in many ways. One is to use a long florist's box with the end cut out for easy withdrawal. If you have saved the box the gun came in, that will do very well.

If you have to carry a pistol in a situation in which you might have to shoot momentarily, carrying it in a brown paper bag in the hand is faster than any holster.

In a car, the possibilities are almost limitless. Pistols can be carried under the seat cushion, shotguns on the back seat covered with a blanket, etc.

Long-term concealment of weapons is a subject that is on many people's minds today. If you are concerned about the possibility of a gun confiscation law there are many ways to hide a gun.

Casual hiding places within your house or apartment offer minimal security. Hiding places under a bed or the floor boards can be found very easily even without the use of metal detectors. Generally, the greater the accessibility the less the security.

A safe deposit box is a very safe way to hide a pistol and a quantity of ammunition. It can't be opened without a court order, it's always safe against the elements, and nobody will find your gun by accident.

Burial may be your choice, particularly if you want to hide long guns or many of them. You have to overcome two problems: corrosion and security. Coating the guns in grease is the old way of doing it. Sealing them in plastic bags with a piece of vaporphase-inhibitor paper is the modern and easy way to do it. Ammunition cannot be packed in grease: it must be sealed in plastic or in an airtight can, such as a surplus ammo box.

Burying the weapons on your own property is a good idea if you observe some precautions. You must not be seen burying the weapons and you must obliterate or disguise the physical evidence of their burial. If your yard is fenced off that will take care of being seen. Don't make the mistake of leaving a four foot by two patch of bare earth in the middle of your lawn. Put in a flower bed or a rock garden. Another possibility is to plant a vegetable garden.

Protection against metal detectors is another problem but it can be solved. One way is to bury randomly pieces of scrap iron or steel both in your yard and in your neighbors'. Nails, bolts, and other objects can be pushed into the earth at night, when you are not likely to be seen, even on neighboring property. On your own, bury a few larger pieces a couple of feet down. The metal detector will pick up readings all over, not only where your weapons are.

An extra bit of insurance is to bury one or two pieces of scrap steel right above your weapons. If a search party decides to dig there they will find it before they uncover your weapons and this might satisfy them. If you are feeling nervous about it bury another piece of scrap iron about a foot under the first one in case of an astute searcher taking

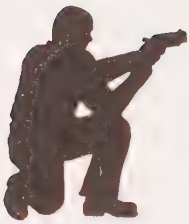
another reading after the first piece has been uncovered. Best of all is if you have an underground gas line going through your property. If so, bury your weapons under that.

If you live in an apartment you have to be more creative because of the limitations. Still, there are so many metal beams and other objects in an apartment building that a metal detector will be beeping constantly.

The safest way to hide your guns is off-site burial. Anything buried on your property or hidden in your walls can be found if the search is thorough enough. It might be very thorough. The searchers will probably be working from a list of gun owners or subscribers to gun magazines, and giving special attention to the names on the list. If so, then you will have to decide which guns to sacrifice, to turn in when ordered to do so and which to hide.

The best thing about burial away from your property is that if they are not in your name and they are found, they implicate nobody. That underlines the importance of having at least one untraceable gun, one without a paperwork "tail" that can lead to you. These can only be bought through a private party nowadays, not a dealer, because dealers are required to keep a record of gun sales. The Federal Gun Control Act has been in effect since 1969. If you can locate a gun that was sold before then you can be sure that it does not have a Federal paperwork tail on it. If you buy it from a party who advertised in a newspaper ad, and you pay in cash, the gun will be practically untraceable to you. If originally sold before 1969 it will be almost officially nonexistent.

It goes without saying that you should hide the ammunition with the gun it fits. What may not be as obvious is to also hide any reloading tools and components. They tell their silent story when found by searchers.



42. Basic Practice For Combat Shooting

One excellent technique for developing the basic skills needed for shooting for real is to set up a number of silhouettes out in the toolies and to fire at them upon command. For this you need some posts, silhouettes, and a partner.

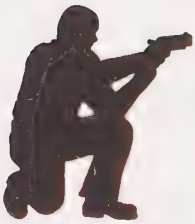
The silhouettes need not be the well-known police-type silhouette targets. In fact, it is better if they are simply cardboard cut to the shape of a human torso. They are stapled onto posts (two by fours or one by twos will do fine) and placed at various distances from the firing line. One shooter walks back and forth along the line. His partner calls the shots, for example:

"One." This means fire at silhouette number one.
"Two shots at one, then one on three." Self-explanatory.

These commands are given at random times, as the shooter walks along the line. The caller can keep track of the shots, and knowing when the shooter is about to go empty will help in calling commands that require the use of a backup gun, if he carries one, or reloading if he does not. For additional practice and variety, the shooter can run a hundred yards before walking the line, or the exercise can be run in bad light or even at night.

The targets can be set up in various ways, for example with one partially obstructing another. The caller can order the shooter to fire at one which is not clearly visible from where he is at the moment. Some of the targets can be partially concealed by brush. The complications are limited only by your ingenuity.

After you have attained a basic proficiency you can go on to scenarios to further develop your skill.



43. The Scenario Method

The "scenario" method is the key to developing effective tactics and techniques for gunfighting. Practicing the scenarios is useful for honing your skills.

Most of us have never been in a gunfight and since a proportion of those who have did not survive to learn from their experiences another method is needed to develop and test gunfighting tactics.

The dictionary defines "scenario" as a plot outline, a theme. For our purposes this is an excellent definition. The basic method is to construct a scenario of a shootout and then try it on for size, as it were, to determine how it works out in practice.

The first step is to outline a situation in which you would have to use gunfire to solve the problem. It is not necessary to totally invent the situation. Many descriptions of real shootouts are available, for example: police reports, newspaper accounts, books and magazines. One excellent way to start is to restage a shootout that has already happened to see if you can improve upon the tactics used. It is easy to do some "Monday morning quarterbacking" on this type of situation because in a real shootout people make decisions hurriedly and under stress, which leads to many errors.

Some books which have valid accounts of shootouts are the following:

Target Blue — Robert Daley
Combat Shooting For Police, both editions — Paul Weston
Fort Apache — Tom Walker

The key word here is "valid". Fictional accounts are not reliable, as often they are written by novelists who know

nothing about guns and shooting and who make such blunders as having their characters putting silencers on revolvers, slipping the safety catch off a revolver, or using a silencer which turns a bang into a whisper. Some fiction writers think that the impact of a .45 caliber bullet will pick the victim up and throw him ten feet. It is difficult enough to construct a scenario which is accurate without being handicapped by a fiction writer's fantasies.

Another way is to imagine a scenario which might happen, such as an intruder in your home or a stickup at work. In that case you have the incomparable advantage of being on the scene and looking over the actual "terrain".

Once you've selected a situation work out a probable course of action for your opponents and a plan of action for yourself. You should include the following factors, at least: Time, Place, Weapons, Positions of antagonists, Cover, Opponent's purpose and plan, Countermoves, and Outcome.

There are many other factors which may or may not apply depending on the situation. Some of them are: Availability of help or reinforcements, Visibility, Innocent bystanders, Hostages, etc. These factors must be applied realistically, as you cannot have either side doing something that it would not do in real life.

Some additional guidelines for devising your own scenarios are:

1. Make it as realistic as you can.
2. Keep the ranges short, as they are in real life.
3. Start in a natural position for the situation rather than a stylized position, (hands clasped, etc). Often you can start with the gun in your hand.
4. Use only street equipment and avoid any competition holsters and extensively reworked guns.
5. Try to include a run in some of the scenarios, as often shots are fired after a chase and in any event the adrenaline is pumping hard.
6. Include shots fired from awkward positions, such as standing on a ladder or shooting under a car or a bush.
7. Always follow sound tactical principles in your

scenarios. Use cover, don't stand up to reload or to clear a jam, and do not put the empties in your pocket. This can get you killed in a real fight.

8. Include some of the psychological hazards present in real life, such as a cup of coffee in the hand, innocent bystanders, hostages, etc.

9. Include some situations requiring that a decision be made on the spot. For example, a choice of target priority — a man with a gun at five yards and a man with a knife at fifteen.

Once you've determined the setting and the scenario you're ready to act it out. It's best to do a dry run first, with empty guns. This enables you to have a live opponent without danger. You might find that some features of your plan are unworkable, for example in a home defense situation slipping the safety off your weapon might be noisy enough to alert the intruder. You might find that a long-barrelled arm is too clumsy for what you have in mind, such as getting out of a car quickly and quietly.

Next comes a run-through with live ammunition. Unlike the dry run, you can't do this in your home or wherever you want. You'll have to do it out in the boonies, where it's safe and the noise won't disturb the neighbors.

Paper or cardboard silhouettes are best for four reasons: they're light, cheap, easily carried and put up. They show the exact placement of hits, while steel targets do not. They also show clearly the holes from different weapons or calibers, which is important if you are using two or more weapons or you are practicing with a partner. If one of you have a shotgun and the other a pistol you'll be able to see who got the hits.

Using both the dry run and the live firing, you'll get a chance to work out the kinks in your scenario. Perhaps some element of your plan is unworkable or the enemy's response has been underestimated. Often the problem will be one of timing. A planned course of action takes too long, enough for your opponent to fire a whole magazine at you or to escape.

Some examples of unworkable scenarios we encountered in our own tests were the following:

The shooter turns, draws, and fires two shots at each of three silhouettes with a pistol, then reloads and fires two more shots at each. The underlying assumption was the shooter would be able to fire two shots into each of the three before they could get him. In over fifty tests run with several different shooters this turned out to be impossible except for one trial. When a second shooter was designated to represent the third assailant, and to draw, turn and fire upon a fourth target upon hearing the first shot, it didn't work. The second shooter was able in all tests but one to respond and hit the fourth silhouette, representing the first shooter, before the first shooter had hit the third target. We ran the tests with both experienced and novice shooters and switched positions and even weapons to simulate varying conditions. This scenario was a turning point in our experimentation for it showed that a scenario which many people had accepted uncritically had a serious flaw. It showed us the need to try everything out in practice instead of assuming that it would work just because some "gun expert" said so.

Another unworkable scenario was one in which three shooters drove by three targets and fired at them while the vehicle was moving. It was pointed out that the vehicle was driven at a funeral pace and the action took place so slowly that in real life the targets would have had adequate time to take cover and to return the fire.

Yet another scenario that showed us its shortcomings was one involving an intruder in the bedroom. The defender would be in bed when the intruder opened the bedroom door and charged him. We found that if the door was assumed to be ten feet or closer that it was impossible for the defender to pick up the pistol from under the pillow and bring it up in time. There was no point in trying scenarios with the pistol in a bedside drawer or under the mattress. The conclusion was obvious: it was necessary to be awake, armed and ready to fire, before the intruder even arrived at the bedroom door.

This led to our devising the "early warning" set-up, that is, arranging furniture and loose objects around the windows so that an intruder would make noise upon entering.

It helps greatly to have a third party along as an observer. One who does not participate actively in the scenarios can often spot weaknesses and shortcomings that the participants miss. Many times a shooter will break cover to reload or to clear a jam. It happens that some shooters expose more of their bodies than absolutely necessary when firing. The observer will notice this, as would the adversary in a real shootout. The observer can time the scenario and make a determination as to whether the time frame is realistic.

The scenario is a way to test responses to a situation, to modify them or even to abandon a plan that proves to be unworkable and adopt one that is.

The following scenarios were based upon real-life incidents in most cases. They are suitable for practice as they are or can be modified to suit your needs.

DEFENSE AGAINST ARMED ASSAULT

Set-up: One target three feet from the shooter; the other twenty feet. Shooter starts on his knees.

Scenario: You've just been jumped by two men, one with a club and the other armed with a knife. The one with the club is nearest you and about to hit you again. Draw and place two hits on each.

Variation: The shooter starts on his feet. Someone behind him gives him a hard push as a signal to start. The push should be hard enough to throw him off balance and should be in a different direction each time.

Critique: Whom did you shoot at first? Why? Did you hit with the critical first shots?

OPENING A DOOR

Set-up: The shooter is lying down facing a door or a simulated door (cardboard sheet) which is closed. Beyond the door are two silhouettes, one with a white patch on it. The shooter does not know where the targets are exactly as they have been moved after the shooter got into position.

Scenario: There are two suspects in a room. One, identified by a white patch, has a gun. Two shots at him.

Critique: Did you make a small enough target of yourself? How fast were you? Did you get him before he was able to shoot at you, in your estimation? How long did it take? Did anyone time it?

CHASING A SUSPECT

Set-up: Pylon with a silhouette thirty feet from it.

Scenario: You're chasing a suspect. He turns and pulls a gun on you. Start a hundred yards away from the pylon, run to it, draw and fire at the silhouette.

Critique: Can you hit as well after running a hundred yards as fast as you can? If not, what can you do as a corrective measure? Have you considered a supported position? Prone?

SNIPER ATTACK

Set-up: Shooter stands beside car. Silhouette is located seventy-five to one hundred yards away. Observer gives a signal to start by firing into the dirt.

Scenario: You're standing by your car when a shot is fired at you. Take cover, draw, and fire. One hit required.

Critique: Did you take cover fast enough? How many shots did it take you to score one hit? Would another weapon have helped? Do you normally carry another weapon in the car? Was your cover adequate? If not, what could you have used instead?

BACKUP GUN, SEVERAL VERSIONS

Set-up One: Several silhouettes at varying distances from shooter. An assistant partially unloads shooter's gun and hands it to him.

Scenario: You're in a firefight and almost out of ammo. When your pistol goes empty draw your backup and use it to finish the fight.

Critique: Does getting your backup into action take as little time as you'd like? What can you do to speed up the changeover? Were you under cover when you ran out of ammo?

Set-up Two: Shooter stands braced and spread against a car or a wall with only his backup gun concealed on his person in the position and condition he'd normally carry it. One target five feet and one twenty-five feet from him.

Scenario: Two suspects have disarmed you during the course of a robbery. When their attention is distracted you go for your backup gun and place two or more shots on each.

Critique: Considering the power of your backup gun, how many shots do you think is necessary to put down your suspects? Did you get the gun out and into action fast enough? Did you hit with it?

Set-up Three: Stepladder and two targets twenty feet from it.

Scenario: You have been chasing two suspects over rooftops and through yards. In doing so you have dropped and lost your service pistol. Suddenly, while you are climbing after them, the suspects turn and fire at you. While holding onto the ladder with one hand, draw and fire at the suspects from halfway up the ladder.

Critique: With the handicaps of an awkward position and a backup gun, did you hit? Would you do this in real life, or would you seek cover first?

(Note: The backup gun scenarios can be done with any type primary weapon. It doesn't matter if it's a service pistol, rifle, or shotgun.)

SQUADROOM SHOOTOUT

Set-up: The shooter is in a chair fifteen feet from two silhouettes, one of which partly obscures the other and which is designated as the hostage. A table or desk may be placed in front of the shooter, if available.

Scenario: You're sitting in the squad room when a prisoner being fingerprinted snatches the officer's gun and tries to escape. Draw upon signal and try to place two hits on the prisoner without hitting the officer. Use your own judgment as to whether to shoot from where you are or to step off to the side for a better angle.

Critique: This actually happened in New York. What does this incident say about the need to search all prisoners. What does it say about putting weapons within reach of prisoners? Is there enough time to step off to the side to get a better shot before the suspect harms the captive officer? What would you do if this scenario were for real?

AMBUSH AT THE TOP OF THE STAIRS

Set-up: Two targets on either side at the top of a flight of stairs. A short hill may be used if a staircase is not available. Shooter climbs up between them.

Scenario: You've been called to a prowler complaint. You're climbing the stairs to the roof of an apartment house and unknown to you two suspects are on the roof already. As you pass between them you spot them out of the corner of your eye and see that they have clubs. Duck, or dive forward, roll and put two hits on each. You may have your gun in your hand as you begin the climb.

Critique: Does this scenario tell you anything about the need for a partner? What would you have done if you had had one? Sent him up first? How would you approach a situation where dangerous suspects might be hidden?

SUSPECT UNDER COVER

Set-up: At twenty feet from the shooter a standard silhouette is set up. A few feet to the side, another is set up partially concealed by cover.

Scenario: You are fired upon by two suspects, one of which is behind cover. Place two shots on each one as quickly as you can.

Critique: Which did you find easier to hit? Was it much harder FOR YOU to hit the one under cover? Did it take too much time, in your opinion? Did you shoot first or go for cover first? Why? Discuss the pros and cons of taking up a crouch or the prone position to make a smaller target of yourself if no cover is nearby.

HOME DEFENSE

Set-up: Shooter is blindfolded. Observer sets up one or two silhouettes at ranges not to exceed twenty-five feet.

Number and distance vary with each run. It is dusk or night. Shooter is either prone or crouched behind a chair. Observer removes blindfold as the starting signal.

Scenario: You are at home and have been awakened by a noise. You take your gun and move toward the noise, lie down or take cover and wait for the intruders to reveal themselves. One of them suddenly turns on the lights.

Critique: Do you shoot fast or take your time? Which one do you go for first? The nearest one? Why? How do you best exploit the advantage of surprise?

CHASING TWO SUSPECTS

Set-up: Two silhouettes thirty feet apart. Shooter starts one hundred yards from nearest silhouette, runs and fires at nearest silhouette when thirty feet from it. Then he runs to first silhouette, stops and fires at second one.

Scenario: You are chasing two suspects. After chasing them for a hundred yards you see one of them turn and fire at you. You return fire. Then you run over to him. The second suspect fires at you. You fire back.

Critique: Is it better to crouch down when fired upon or to return fire from the standing position? Why? Should you have shot both suspects immediately, at the first sign of trouble? Why?

STORE HOLDUP

Set-up: Two silhouettes twenty feet apart, with a chair or table by the nearest one. Shooter starts thirty feet from the nearest one. (optional — there may be one or two "innocent bystanders" silhouettes obstructing the suspects' silhouettes.)

Scenario: You are responding to a robbery in progress call. You run towards the store. Halfway to the chair you see one armed suspect. You fire at him. You run to him and then you see another armed suspect who had been out of sight around a corner. You fire at him, using the chair or table as cover, taking care to expose yourself as little as possible.

Critique: Is it wise to run right in where there is a robbery in progress? When is the right moment to draw your gun? If you respond with a shotgun, when do you jack a shell into

the chamber? If you had a partner when you responded to this call, how would you do it differently?

SURPRISE ATTACK AT NIGHT

Set-up: One or more shooters sitting around a car or a campfire at night. An observer sets up several silhouettes around them at different ranges. Observer fires a blank cartridge to signal the start of the attack and times the event.

Scenario: You are attacked. The first shots miss and you counterattack. Try to spot and take out all of the targets, using fire and maneuver.

Critique: Did you get all of the targets? If you missed any, why? Did you find the pistol or the shotgun more effective at night? Were you in danger of running out of ammo? Were you in any danger of shooting each other? Did running through the scenario several times improve your performance?

HOSTAGE SITUATION

Set-up: Three silhouettes, two of which are set up with one partially obstructing the other, as in a hostage situation. Shooter has carbine or a shotgun loaded with slugs. Another shooter, similarly armed, is a few feet away. Both of you are behind cover.

Scenario: You are confronting two armed robbers who have taken a hostage. Your partner is aiming carefully at the hostage-taker while you are covering the other. The plan is for your partner to shoot the hostage-taker while you, upon hearing the shot, take out the other one before he can turn and harm the hostage. Your partner may miss and you must decide what to do then.

Critique: If your partner misses, is it better for you to take out your suspect first or to switch targets first? Do you wait to see if your partner has hit before shooting? Are you close enough to see? Run through it again with a different plan.

THE AMBUSH

Set-up: Several silhouettes on one or both sides of a road. Two or more shooters in a vehicle driving down the road.

One observer riding as passenger in the vehicle. Observer shifts targets between runs. Starting signal is a blank cartridge.

Scenario: You are driving along when the ambushers open fire on you. You stop and shoot it out with them. Plan how you will do this beforehand. Decide who will cover which side, etc.

Critique: Was your response fast enough? Did you hit your targets? Were your actions well coordinated? Were there any awkward pauses or hesitations because of uncertainty?

THE AMBUSH, VARIATION ONE

Set-up: Same as before.

Scenario: Same as before but this time you don't stop. You try to drive through it, firing back as you go.

Critique: Which is the better way of handling the ambush? What do you do if the road is blocked?

THE AMBUSH, VARIATION TWO

Set-up: Same as before.

Scenario: Same as before but this time one of the passengers riding shotgun piles out immediately as the driver slows down, then the driver goes a few yards further on and piles out himself, along with any remaining passengers.

Critique: Is anyone actually using a shotgun? Does it work better? Is it best to fire from within the vehicle, to use it as cover, or to abandon it altogether? Why? Is there anything to be gained from spraying the area? Why? In what circumstances?

THE AMBUSH, VARIATION THREE

Set-up: Same as before, but at night. Use pistols and carbines only.

Scenario: Same as before but the road is blocked, forcing you to stop and shoot it out.

Critique: How well did you hit? Would you consider turning the vehicle so that the headlights illuminate one side of the ambush area, then bailing out?

THE AMBUSH, VARIATION FOUR

Set-up: Same as before.

Scenario: Same as before but this time you have shotguns.

Critique: Does using shotguns make it easier to hit the targets at night?

THE AMBUSH, VARIATION FIVE

Set-up: Same as before.

Scenario: Same as before, a night ambush, but no roadblock. Upon hearing the shots, the driver douses the lights and drives on through the ambush area. The passengers meanwhile spray the area with shotgun fire. There should be one passenger at least firing from each side of the vehicle.

Critique: How well does suppressive fire work in this situation? Would you think that any other weapon could work as well for this purpose as the shotgun? Why?

44. Quantifying Shootouts

In many gun books and magazines you'll find tables of numbers that deal with muzzle velocity, kinetic energy, and other quantifications of guns and shooting. You'll also find a lot of articles on "stopping power" formulas and lots of opinions on what cartridges are adequate. Rarely will you find numbers that you can apply directly to your situation. One reason is that only you can provide this information.

Do you know at what range you can draw and fire from the hip and be sure of hitting a man-sized target? Beyond this range you'll have to take a rough sight over the barrel or aim more carefully, depending on how far the range is. Some figures are listed in this book but they may not apply to you.

What percentage of hits do you consider adequate? Nine out of ten? What do you do? That gives you an idea of how many shots you should fire to be sure of a hit.

How does running affect your marksmanship? You should know this in order to get an idea of how you'll be able to hit when your hands are shaking and your heart is pounding.

What about your shooting in bad light? Does your percentage of hits at a given range go down in the bad light you are using? How bad does the light have to be before you can't hit any more? The answers to these questions will help you avoid wasting ammunition trying to hit in hopeless situations. You'll be better off trying to illuminate your opponent or getting out of there altogether.

How far away can you hit taking a rough sight and with careful aiming? What is the extreme range at which you can hit with a pistol, rifle, or a shotgun? The answers to these questions will affect the tactics you will use if ever you get into a gunfight.

What is your reaction time? How fast can you draw and hit? How much longer does it take if someone else gives you the signal? How much longer does it take if you have to make a decision instead of just firing at one target in front of you? The time it takes you to react has a lot to do with whether you should, in a certain situation, try to fire first or go for cover first.

How long does it take you to stop a car at various speeds and get your gun into action? The answer, which will vary with the speed of the car, will be at least two seconds and maybe a lot more. A car traveling at thirty miles per hour will cover eighty-eight feet in two seconds. If fired upon while driving, is it best to drive out of it, or stop to shoot it out? If your assailant is in the middle of the road you might be better off trying to run him down. You might run into someone foolish enough to stand and fire at an oncoming car as they do it on TV.

If you are firing at moving targets, do you know the leads for your weapon? What about the hold-over for a long-range shot? You might not have time to adjust the sights in combat.

How does your weapon penetrate? Will it go through a car? A wall? Knowing this will enable you to nail an opponent who takes cover behind what he thinks is a solid object.

How does your ammo ricochet? You should have a clear answer to this if you ever hope to use ricochet fire.

These are all real numbers dealing with real events, not statistical abstractions, and they have a direct bearing on the outcome of any gunfight in which you are involved. They don't make very interesting reading compared to exciting descriptions of the new Magnum caliber, and testing to derive the numbers can be just dull, dull, dull. They are important. Your life may depend on them someday.

PART IV.
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. I'm a police officer. My partner and I have decided that if ever one of us is held hostage that the other one will not give up his gun or surrender to the suspect. Do you have any suggestions?

A. Yes I do. A law officer I know, who feels the same way, has a procedure worked out with his partner. If he is being held at gunpoint and the suspect demands that his partner surrender too, he will tell his partner to comply, but will address his partner by his own name, as a signal to make a move. Upon hearing the words "Do what he tells you, Ken." the partner makes the appropriate move, say drawing and firing at the suspect while the first officer ducks out of the way or tries to disarm the suspect. The important point here is that this officer and his partner have worked out and rehearsed their tactics over a period of time. The verbal signal is the signal to act but the tactics are not improvised, they are pre-planned.

Q. I've heard that sometimes terrorists force their hostages to change clothes with them to fool the police. How do you cope with that?

A. You have to be very, very careful. That is why you can't rashly employ snipers who shoot at anything that moves. This is an old trick, so old that it's even been shown on TV. If you are briefing an assault force, get as complete a description of the terrorists as possible, and include photographs if you can.

Q. What do you consider the effective range of a pistol?

A. That depends on a lot of things, such as the pistol itself, the skill of the shooter, the firing position, and the situation itself, to name a few. Generally speaking, most shooters can hit a target the size of a man, shooting a medium-caliber pistol and aiming carefully, out to fifty or a

hundred yards. If this seems a bit vague, remember that situations vary so much that it is difficult to give a good rule of thumb.

Q. What sort of defense gun should my wife have?

A. The answer to that one is easy — the most powerful one that she can shoot accurately. If the situation allows, a shotgun will do it.

Q. I want to get a shotgun for home protection. What gauge should I get?

A. The answer is the same as for other guns — the largest that you can handle. That usually means a twelve-gauge. It has plenty of power and the ammunition for it is commonly available. Wherever you go you'll find twelve-gauge carried in stock.

Q. Does having a powerful weapon such as a shotgun make other factors such as tactics less important?

A. Not really. The added power gives you an edge but even an atom bomb can be used ineptly. Tactics and originality are always important. Improvisations can be useful. Catching your enemy by surprise is worth more than raw firepower.

Q. Does having a more powerful weapon make up somewhat for inaccuracy in shot placement? How important is marksmanship?

A. There is an old saying: "I'd rather be missed by a .45 than hit by a .22". It's worth repeating.

To give an example from real life, David Berkowitz, the notorious "Son of Sam" murderer in New York, used a .44 Special in his attacks. The .44 Special is a reasonably heavy cartridge.

He fired at people from close up, sometimes within touching distance. All of his victims were unarmed and they were still targets. The only handicap Berkowitz faced was that the light was poor, since he attacked at night.

He attacked fifteen people. Three were killed instantly from head wounds. Three more died of wounds from three to eighteen hours after being shot. Two were maimed. Two made more or less complete recoveries. He missed two of his intended victims completely.

This is mediocre performance for surprise attacks upon unarmed victims. People who like to argue about "stopping power" should keep this in mind. Marksmanship comes first.

Q. Should I get one of those shotguns made just for firing rifled slugs?

A. The type of shotgun made for firing slugs has a slightly smaller bore than a regular shotgun and it has rifle type sights. It is excellent for firing slugs but little else. If you load it with conventional shotshells you will get overpressure, which may damage the gun. In any event, if you want something that shoots like a rifle you should get a rifle. If you want a shotgun you should get a shotgun. It will still fire slugs if you need them. The slug has its uses but it does not make a rifle out of a shotgun. Getting a shotgun that is limited to firing slugs is getting the worst of both possible worlds.

Q. How much reserve ammo should I carry?

A. That depends on the situation, but most of the time not very much. Remember that most gunfights are over before you need to reload. Most policemen carry an extra six or twelve rounds for a revolver or an extra clip or two for an automatic. For what it's worth, the Secret Service detail protecting the President carry only six extra rounds on their persons.

Q. You've only discussed how to fit a silencer on an automatic pistol. What about revolvers?

A. Silencers don't work well on revolvers because some of the propellant gas escapes through the gap between the cylinder and the barrel, negating the effect of any attachment you can put on the end of the barrel.

Q. When in a night shootout should I shoot by sound if I can't see my opponent?

A. This is a complicated problem and requires a complicated answer.

The first thing to keep in mind is that no firearm is completely free of muzzle flash. If both of you can't see each other and you shoot by sound alone, you give him something to see and shoot at.

Another factor is that in our tests we have found that it is almost impossible to hit a man-sized target as close as ten feet with a pistol, using sound alone. We ran tests using blindfolded subjects and also tests firing at night, using targets that blended in with the background to the point of being almost invisible. Even using luminous sights did not help much. Our results were only about one hit in ten shots fired.

The picture changes somewhat when using a shotgun, as our patterning tests show that the charge from a shotgun having a cylindrical bore expands significantly beyond ten feet. In other words, a near miss with a pistol is still a miss: a near miss with a shotgun means that you still hit with a part of the pattern.

Q. Will shooting in "combat" matches sharpen my shooting skill?

A. Certainly. In addition it's a lot of fun. However, don't expect that shooting in "combat" matches will prepare you for a contest with a target that shoots back. See them for what they really are: a lot of good, clean fun.

Q. How important is physical fitness in shooting?

A. Not quite as important as in the other martial arts. It does not take unusual strength or coordination to fire a gun accurately. This can be a misleading answer, however, even though it is literally true. Regular practice is important to keep up your shooting skill.

Another thing to consider is that if you expect to defend your life with a weapon you may well have to run, jump, and roll in the process. You may have to engage in hand-to-hand

combat with your opponent. That does require some physical strength and agility.

Jogging a few hundred yards each day is the minimum that you need to keep in shape. If you can do a little swimming, or if you have a buddy with whom you can wrestle or practice some hand-to-hand combat, then better yet. You don't have to keep in shape like a paratrooper but don't get fat and flabby.

Q. Should I get custom grips for my pistol?

A. Certainly, if you feel that they will make the gun fit your hand better, but be very careful of what kind you get. If they are too big, or too fancy, or if they are designed to the contour of your shooting hand they may cause you more trouble than they're worth. You should be able to shoot with either hand with whatever grips you get. They should not make the gun too large to fit in a holster. If the gun is a revolver, they should not be so big that they impede extraction of the fired cases or the use of a speedloader, if you use one.

Q. What about the quality of guns made today? I've heard that they are not as good as they used to be.

A. That is true, to an extent. Most American made firearms are not as well finished as they were years ago. Production shortcuts result in guns that are a little rougher than they could be. Nevertheless, there are some manufacturers, such as Smith & Wesson and Ruger, who still produce guns that function very reliably right out of the box. Not all manufacturers are up to this standard.

If you are good with small tools and you know what you are doing, it is a good idea to disassemble a gun you buy before you fire the first shot. Remove any burrs and smooth out the moving parts. This will go a long way to improve the feel of the gun when you fire it. If you are not sure of what you are doing take the gun to a gunsmith or leave it alone. You can't afford to risk damaging a gun upon which your life might depend.

Q. I saw a picture of a police officer holding his automatic in a two-handed grip with a spare magazine in his left hand. This made for a loose grip. I thought, but the people who wrote the book in which I saw the picture said that it speeded up reloading. What do you think?

A. I saw the same picture, as I read that book too. The gun was a Smith & Wesson Model 59, which holds fourteen rounds in the magazine. Because of this large magazine capacity it is hard to understand the urgency of reloading in this case. Another problem this causes is in drawing the gun. In a gunfight you may have little enough time to get the gun out but if you try to draw a spare magazine at the same time, then coordinate your movements so that you bring it up so that your left hand also grips the gun, your draw will be more complicated and more prolonged. Trying to do all this before you even get your first shot off can get you into a bad situation. Get those early shots off fast and straight and you won't need to reload.

Q. Do you feel that it is better to keep the holster strap snapped or unsnapped?

A. I prefer it unsnapped. You may not have the choice. If you are a policeman your department will probably require you to keep it snapped. There are supposedly two reasons for this and their validity depends on the area you work and the conditions therein. Safety is cited as a reason. The second reason is that the strap impedes anyone from taking the gun from you by pulling it out of your holster. This second one is the only one that seems to hold any water, in my view, and that entirely depends upon the sort of city or neighborhood you work. In an area with a high amount of street crime the prospect of having your gun snatched is serious enough to warrant keeping the strap snapped.

Q. Do you recommend shoulder holsters?

A. Only if you practice drawing from it more than you would practice drawing from a belt holster. Shoulder holsters are not as common now as before. Part of the reason is that a belt holster, whether at the hip nearest the gun hand or

crossdraw, is faster and easier to use. Your hand does not have to travel as far.

Q. Can you suggest a way for uniformed officers to recognize undercover or plainclothesmen so that tragic accidents will be avoided?

A. There are several ways. They are applicable in different situations. One is to do as the New York City anti-crime units do and carry colored headbands or armbands, to be put on when the action starts.

A badge pinned to the shirt or jacket will do but an undercover man would not want to carry a badge.

If you use armbands or headbands a lot of you might consider changing the color periodically to frustrate imitators.

Security or bodyguard details for VIPs, such as the Secret Service detail guarding the President, use lapel pins. These are different colors and have different designs on them. They are changed every day to facilitate recognition and frustrate imposters.

Q. I feel that the .308 caliber is a better man-stopper than the .223. I think that the AK-47 the Viet Cong used was a better gun all around than the "Mattell Gun" we were issued. What do you think?

A. The .308 has a bit more recoil and may be harder to shoot than the .223. However, whatever you think, you will find a lot of people agreeing with you and a lot disagreeing. Read the back issues of *Soldier of Fortune* magazine and you will find that their various columns and their letters from readers have kept this controversy alive for several years. One man thinks that the .223 is worthless. Another thinks it is quite good. Yet another praises the Soviet or Chinese assault rifle in 7.62mm caliber. Take your choice.

Q. I've heard that some New York cops in really bad neighborhoods have a special technique for searching dangerous suspects without the risk of being disarmed. What do they do?

A. One technique of which I've heard is to place the muzzle of the revolver hard between the suspect's buttocks when he is spread against a wall. You pull the trigger and hold the hammer back with your thumb, warning the suspect that any move he makes will dislodge your thumb. Unless you do this right you can be disarmed. The points to watch are:

Keep the gun pressed in hard so that if the suspect moves he won't dislodge the gun.

Make sure the suspect is almost horizontal against the wall, so that he has no leverage for a spring.

Make sure the suspect knows exactly what you are doing so that he is convinced that one false move will result in his guts being splattered all over the wall. Explain it graphically.

Q. Why don't you have a section on disarming?

A. There are several reasons. One is that frankly, I don't feel that I know enough about disarming techniques to offer any useful advice to someone whose life may depend on it some day. Although I've read various books on the subject, there is no technique with which I feel comfortable and which I would offer to others. Another reason is that I have a suspicion that disarming techniques have been over-rated. I have yet to meet anyone who successfully disarmed an armed and dangerous opponent with his bare hands. By contrast, I have met several people who have shot it out with dangerous felons and lived to tell the tale. Although no authoritative statistics are available to me, I feel that the number of people who have survived a disarming attempt is much smaller than those who have survived gunfights.

Q. Are there any publications that print really good gun tests so that I will have a good idea of what I'm buying?

A. Fortunately there is. A publication called *Handgun Tests*, out of California, has a staff that does gun tests in a different way. They do not accept samples from manufacturers, which might well be carefully tuned guns. They buy their samples in a store, over the counter, as any consumer would. They turn up a lot of defective guns that way. They

boast that they do not accept gun manufacturers' ads and that this keeps their tests objective. I doubt that that is the deciding factor, however. The National Rifle Association runs gun ads galore in the *American Rifleman* but I do not feel that that impairs their objectivity. They do let the manufacturers supply them with the guns they test and that is the problem.

Any gun you buy should be gone over before you fire it, as previously indicated. Few are completely finished. Most have rough spots to be smoothed out.

The same people who publish *Handgun Tests* put out an excellent magazine called *Pistolero* which has some test reports and some thoughtful articles on gunfighting. The style of writing is exuberant, to say the least, but they call it the way they see it, and do not simply rehash what they read in last month's issue of another gun magazine, something I suspect some others do.

Q. I have seen a couple of combat matches and some of those people competing are very good; better than I think I'll ever be. How much do they practice to get that good?

A. Most pistol champions I've spoken with are very reticent about the amount of practice they get, but a couple of them, in unguarded moments, have let something slip that gave me a good idea. One told me that he went through eleven thousand primers in four months of reloading. As a ball-park figure, that sounds reasonable. You should note, however, that you do not have to burn up ammunition in all of your practice. Dry firing will do a lot for your draw, coordination, and speed.

Q. I bought a gun that was highly recommended by a test report that I'd read. It turned out to have a really bad trigger. What sort of confidence can I have in published tests after this?

A. You must remember one important fact. Any test report, no matter what the reputation of the person doing the test, is usually based on just one or two samples. This is not enough and it is a fact often overlooked by the people

who write these reports. The tester may be as honest as the day is long but in any mass-production process some jewels roll off the assembly line, and also some lemons. The only defense you have is to try to gather several opinions as to the gun's worth, as you might with a car. If some of your friends have that particular gun, ask them how they like it and don't count one opinion as decisive.

Q. I saw a pistol match recently and I was amazed by the speed and skill of the ones who won and placed. I don't think I can ever be that good. What chance do I have if I ever get into a shootout?

A. Your chances are still pretty good, I think. First, you have to realize that the winners in an athletic contest, and that is what a shooting match is, are natural-born athletes who in addition to being naturally endowed train constantly for these contests. Their strength, eyesight, and reflexes are much better than those of people such as we. They could probably outrun us or outfight us hand to hand if it came to that.

In a real shootout, you must never let your opponent use any natural superiority he might have over you. Your tactics, such as using cover and surprise, should nullify any natural advantage he enjoys.

Finally, these people who are such avid shooters tend to be very law-abiding types. It is very unlikely that you will find one of them robbing your home or business.

Q. I live in an apartment and the walls are very thin. I have a .357 Magnum pistol and I'm worried about over-penetration. Is there anything I can do?

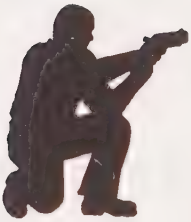
A. Yes, either get a shotgun and load it with birdshot, or load your pistol with the Speer shotshells for .38/.357. This will still make a nice hole in an intruder and will minimize the risk of shooting through into the next room or apartment.

Q. I don't get much of a chance to practice scenarios and in any event I don't have any abandoned houses in which to practice. Can you suggest anything?

A. Take a walk around your house and your neighborhood. Look at it from the point of view of seeking cover and firing points and you will develop a knack for tactics. Go over the various factors in your head as often as possible and mentally rehearse what you would do if involved in a shootout in your house, on your street, where you work, and anywhere else that you frequent. Mentally reverse the roles, too, and visualize yourself as the aggressor so that you learn to see it from "the other side of the hill" and to anticipate a potential opponent's moves.

Pure thought isn't enough. Walk over to various positions of cover and survey the scene from them to see how it looks to an adversary. Pick out fields of fire, lines of movement, and ways to outflank the various positions you have surveyed. That way, if you are ever in a shootout in familiar surroundings, you will have already evaluated the situation and tentatively devised tactics. If you are in unfamiliar territory, you will at least have practiced looking at it from a tactical point of view.

If you want to really polish your skills, learn to look at each room, each street, each building you enter from the point of view of shooting it out with an adversary in that location. Look for ambush positions, look for cover, look for escape routes, look for lines of advance and ways to outflank an adversary. That is the way to keep your mental gears well-oiled so that if it ever happens to you, you will be ready.



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SHOOTING TO LIVE — Fairbairn and Skyes, Paladin Press. This is an excellent, simply written book by two well qualified men who pioneered close combat techniques decades ago. It is old but not obsolete. A classic.

WOUND BALLISTICS — U.S. Army Medical Department. An excellent, scholarly book on what gunshot wounds are and how they are caused. It describes in great detail the mechanism of wounding and the factors that go into it. This is the book that all the writers who write about "stopping power" either did not read or did not understand. It's almost nine hundred pages long and tells the whole story.

NO SECOND PLACE WINNER — Bill Jordan, Shreveport, La. Another excellent book by an experienced pistol shooter. This is the best book on quick draw so far, and it has a lot of useful advice for police officers in general. It is a good basic book on gunfighting.

COMBAT SHOOTING FOR POLICE — Paul Weston, Charles C. Thomas. This book is a more formal approach to training police in the use of guns. Its value lies in the author's extensive knowledge of the basic procedures. It contains good material for developing scenarios.

QUICK OR DEAD — William L. Cassidy, Paladin Press. This is a short, well balanced history of combat shooting that cuts through the myths and gets right to the facts. The author has a simple, logical way of relating the story while avoiding dogmatism and some of the cultism that has arisen in the

field in the last few years. The last part of the book is an easy-to-read basic course in self-defense with a handgun.

PRINCIPLES OF PERSONAL DEFENSE — Jeff Cooper, Paladin Press. Proper mental attitude to take when fighting for your life. While you won't learn any nuts and bolts from this book, it's worth reading for the philosophy alone. It is only forty-two pages long and doesn't waste a word.

POLICE TACTICS IN ARMED OPERATIONS — Greenwood, Paladin Press. One of the better books on the subject, written by an English police officer. It is rather long but worth reading if you can get through it. The ideas presented are refreshing and novel even though presented in a formal style. It is very comprehensive, covering every type of situation a police department might have to handle. There is quite a bit of attention devoted to the administrative side of armed operations, which will be of little interest to the civilian or the street cop.

STREET SURVIVAL — Adams, McTernan, and Remsberg, Calibre Press. This is the best book for a street cop I've ever seen. It covers almost all of the nuts and bolts of shootouts, searches, autostops, and the other situations that a beat cop can encounter. It is profusely illustrated and about four hundred pages long. It stands far above most other books in its relevance and applicability to what goes on in American streets today.

KILL OR GET KILLED — Rex Applegate, Paladin Press. A good book, although somewhat dated, on combat shooting and street fighting, with sections on prisoner handling and riot control that make it very interesting reading. The author is of the Fairbairn-Sykes school of shooting and that is an excellent credential. It is over four hundred pages long, well written and easy to read, and deals thoroughly with each topic it covers.

SNIPING, U.S.M.C. The Marine Corps Sniping Manual. A thorough coverage of what goes into getting hits at long ranges with a rifle. The manual concentrates on nuts and bolts techniques more than theory and has many illustrations. Despite its official layout and language, it is well-written in a less formal style than you would expect if you are used to the boiler-plate language of most military manuals. This makes it easy to read and understand, even though the authors have not oversimplified their topic.

COMBAT: HOUSE TO HOUSE — Terry Edwards, Unit Nine, Canada. While this is written more for the military man than the police officer or the civilian, it is worthwhile reading for its emphasis on tactics in an urban environment. While many of the procedures described will not be applicable to your situation unless you join the army, you can get a lot of useful information out of this book.

MERCENARY'S MANUAL — Terry Edwards, Unit Nine, Canada. This is a guide to small unit tactics that is not completely applicable to our needs but contains some very good general information that we can use. There are several checklists in there which apply to shootouts in civilian life. There is, for example, an outstanding checklist on precautions you can take to avoid an ambush that is relevant to patrolling a high-crime neighborhood.

FORT APACHE — Tom Walker, Avon Books. This book, written by a policeman, contains several good accounts of incidents that make raw material for scenarios. In addition, it tells of patrolling one of the worst districts in the country, the South Bronx in New York.

TARGET BLUE — Robert Daley, Dell Books. This is an account written by a man who is neither a trained police officer nor a gun hobbyist, but is a good writer who records accurately the details of his service as a deputy police commissioner in New York City. His chapter on guns gives an excellent picture of what police shootouts in the big city are

like. Other chapters contain good material for scenarios, as well as descriptions of some of the major crimes of the era, such as the rash of ambush shootings of policemen. The descriptions are very detailed and for that reason useful for the tactical lessons they suggest.

SHOOTOUT — Tony Lesce, Desert Publications, Cornville, Arizona. This is a basic text in real-life shooting and a forerunner of this book. It is worthwhile as a quick course, as it is significantly shorter than this book.

THE SHOTGUN IN COMBAT — Tony Lesce, Desert Publications. This book deals exclusively with the shotgun and is a detailed study of the shotgun, its ballistics, and its use in real-life shooting situations. There is a lot of material on home defense, reflecting the author's point of view that the shotgun is the best weapon for home defense in most cases. It contains many photographs and diagrams.

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